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THE
G O S P E L
A M B A S S A D O R ;
OR,
Christian Pilgrim's Friend.

VOLUME VI.

"Blessed are the poor in Spirit, for their's is the kingdom of Heaven," *Mat. v. 3.*

"The Election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded," *Rom. xi. 7.*

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EDITORS' ADDRESS.

One among the rest of the advantages of vital godliness is, that it rests not upon anything outward, or upon anything temporal, for all who worship, who serve God acceptably, must serve him in spirit and in truth; such and such only love the God whom they serve, and they are soul and body his for ever, their hope enters into that inheritance which is in heaven, and which fadeth not away; they have foundations eternal upon which to build. Though, therefore, the earth be removed, and the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea, yet the foundation of God standeth sure; having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his, and from all their iniquities and idols will he cleanse them.

Knowledge, love, joy, peace, will accompany us, not only when all outward means shall be out of our reach, but also when "mortal life shall cease." But take the formalist, or mere letter professor, strip such of their forms and of their talk about religion, what have they left? what real humbling knowledge of sin and self? what know they of the quickening, reproving, refreshing power of the holy Spirit of God? what know they of hungerings and thirstings after Christ? what know they of pardon sealed home upon the conscience, of peace with God, of being rooted and grounded in his love, and of being established

in his holy fear? To these essentials of godliness they are strangers, they do not spiritually know the scriptures nor the power of God; theirs is a religion which will not go with them through the swelling of Jordan, except it be to bear testimony against them.

But those who do receive the truth in the love thereof, will, when they leave this world, take perfection with them—they are complete in him. As we can thus give up this life without parting with one grain of vital godliness, so we could have discontinued the *Gospel Ambassador*, without ceasing to be equally concerned for our own and others' welfare; but if this work be a means, however humble, that the *Lord is pleased to own*, and to enable us to go on under the conviction of these points, we should not feel justified in ceasing to labour in this department.

Real, solid, and *lasting* profit is our object; we like to receive *scriptural* reproof, rebuke, chastening, aye, and even scourging, *Heb. xii. 6*, such as shall make us more and more in earnest with our own souls, and with the souls of others, and such as shall make us more interested, more lively in the ways of wisdom, that we may not merely walk, but *run* in the way of his commandments. And then we also like the scriptures to be opened up to us, and for the doctrine thereof to descend as the rain and distil as the dew. We like to be softened in our hearts, to be visited with salvation, for the word of Christ to dwell in us richly, and to be by a close acquaintance with these things, enabled to trust the Lord for everything temporal, for he knoweth we have need of these things, and has said they shall be added. While we desire to *look* not at the things which are seen, for these are temporal; but at things which are not seen. for these are eternal.

The reproof and the refreshing, which we like most, we repeat, must be *Scriptural*, and therefore the reproof which comes from the legalist or from an offended party, is not reproof; it is *reproach*. They, the legalists, reproach us in our testimony of our state by nature, knowing it as we do, to be a state of death, of rottenness, vileness, helplessness, guiltiness, and abomination.

They (the legalists) reproach us in our election of God, in our acceptance in Christ, in our sealing by the holy spirit up to the day of redemption, and in the security we have in the immutable covenant of our God. How then say ye pharisees unto us, flee as a bird to your mountain; for after all, if the foundations be destroyed, what shall the righteous do. No, the rod of the wicked shall not rest upon the lot of righteous, lest the righteous put forth their hands unto the same lawless doctrines, connections, and pursuits.

The reader (if he know the truth) will then see what we mean, and what we do not mean, by *vital* godliness, and also that scriptural *reproof* is not to be taken for *reproach*, nor is the natural man capable in *spiritual* matters of judging concerning us, but in matters temporal and moral. They can judge, but not in matters spiritual.

In our present position our desires may be expressed thus:—

First,—*To hold fast whereunto we have attained.* We wish not to forget that we were bondmen in worse than Egyptian bondage, that we were as the helpless infant, cast into the open field; but God suffered us not to be destroyed, but passed by the place where we were, gave us life, preserved us in all our hard bondage, found out for us a way of deliverance, found for us a ransom, found out for us David his servant, the king his Son, to reign over us; and did he not love us, would he have set such a king over us, or brought us under such a government; when over others he hath set the sword, the famine, the pestilence, the wild beasts, and left them a prey to death and hell.

But he hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities, but shewed us mercy. He brought us to taste that he is gracious, and to have peace and communion with him, and to know that he saves to the *utmost* the vilest of the vile, and has guided, forgiven, borne with, refreshed, supported, and kept us up to this day. And we know full well it could *not* be by works of righteousness which *we have done*, but according to his mercy, he hath saved us by

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the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us, and all this according to his own purpose and grace, given us in Christ before the world began.

And he hath brought us to know, that the more we are kept to the *letter* and in the *spirit* of his truth, the farther we are from carnal mindedness and from temptation and from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, and that there is no real peace but in being spiritually minded. And though often ready to halt, and staggering to and fro like a drunken man, yet we are not halting *between two opinions*. The Lord has shewn unto us the things which belong to our peace, and we believe, yea, we know it shall be according to what is written. These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world. *John, xvi, 33.*

Having through grace attained unto this standing, we should tremble at the thought of falling from our stedfastness in these things, or at being removed from the hope of the Gospel; yet being in the body it is for us not to be high minded, but to fear. We desire as far as in us lieth to keep in remembrance the great things the Lord has done for us, and if we cannot, or are not favoured to be *always abounding* in the work of the Lord; yet we desire at least not to go back or give up what we know, for there is some encouragement for those that tarry by the stuff as well as for those who are able to go down to the battle. And as there was a law in Israel in favour of those who tarried by the stuff, so there is a promise in the Gospel for such as buy the truth and sell it not. Because thou *hast kept* the word of my patience, I will also keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world to try them that *dwell upon the earth*, *Rev. iii. 10.* And although our crown of life, righteousness, and glory eternal is safe and cannot be lost; yet we desire not only to get to heaven, but to get there as honorably as we can, and not to lose by the way that crown of holy liberty which we now have. This crown we desire to hold fast, that no man take it from us, so that we may at last be able to say we have

fought a good fight, *kept* the faith, and thus finish our course with joy. But we desire also,

Secondly,—*To grow in grace.* As disciples we desire to come more than ever under *gospel discipline*; knowing this yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness to them who are exercised thereby. Daily bearing the cross, self denial, persevering by prayer and supplication, are good wholesome exercises; they are a means of making us strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

Cross providences, afflictions, and trials of various kinds, bring to light the dross of poor old nature. They show what we are, they stop us from boasting, make us thankful for the least crumb of mercy, they drive us from false refuges, they separate us from those who have the form of godliness, but deny the power thereof. These things will enable us to distinguish between ministers of the spirit, and ministers merely of the letter. We shall thus find the narrow way which leadeth unto life. We shall be zealous for that which is well worth being zealous for. The precepts of men will be put down, and the truth, the authority and honour of God set up. In this path, there will be much opposition to encounter, especially from within. There will be murmurings and complainings, besetments, confusion, and every evil work. These will often bring us into captivity and embitter our very existence, yet the elder shall serve the younger, and we learn by these things where our strength is. What advantage then have we. We have much every way, chiefly because unto us are committed the oracles of God, and that unto us pertaineth the adoption and the glory, and the service of God, and the promises.

We therefore desire to *go on* in these things. The enemy is busy, sin is active, temptations are powerful and thickly strewed, our age is advancing, professors are compromising their principles, humanly devised forms and fashions abound, all reminding us that it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace. But

We know nothing as yet, compared with what is *yet to be*

revealed, and the Lord hath said, call upon me, and I will show thee great and mighty things which thou knowest not ; and to know these things is life eternal, and we owe an incalculable debt of love and gratitude to God, and we cannot sing praises without *understanding*. Hence the request of the Apostle, for the Ephesians, entirely agrees with our desire, that the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Glory, may give unto you the spirit of *wisdom* and *revelation*, in the knowledge of him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that ye may know what is the *hope* of his calling, and what the *riches* of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, *Eph.* i ; and as we desire to hold fast whereunto we have attained, and also grow in grace, we would,

Thirdly,—*Wish to use every means tending to these ends.* The public ministration of the word is a means of divine appointment, and much owned and blest from above ; and he that despiseth this means, despiseth not man, but God, who has promised to be with *his* ministers always, even unto the end of the world. We would not wish to forsake the assembling ourselves together as the manner of *some* is.

Reading the word of God and prayer are another means of divine appointment. The word of God is the key of heavenly knowledge ; yea, wherewith shall any one cleanse his way, but by taking heed thereto, according to the word of God, and pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands ; not hands of opposition to the truth, and pray without wrath and doubting, saith the Apostle, that is with sobriety of mind, and without *wilful malicious* calling in question the truth of God.

The writings of good men, while they have unintentionably made speculative professors, and furnished many *graceless* mortals with knowledge, dry knowledge enough to become preachers, and a pest to the Church : yea, and some even good, but mistaken men, have been thus furnished, while their preaching is more like the dry wind of the wilderness, than like the heaven's dropping down dew. Such become very often sort of public paupers, and are a burden to themselves, and every body about them.

But notwithstanding drawbacks, the writings of good men are profitable ; from an assurance of this, from also an apprehension that this little work has been *more* useful than we had expected, and from a hope that it will be yet more useful, we venture upon a commencement of our sixth volume, and if there be anything at all moving of a spiritual kind, ministers and correspondents will have something for us to publish well worth reading ; and although we must make principle alone our guide, yet we wish to give principle its proper freedom of action. If for instance any person should deem himself in any way wronged by anything we say, we are open to conviction, and should do all we could to avoid doing violence to any man desiring to walk in *truth* and peace.

SKETCHES OF SERMONS, BY W. GADSBY.

1 *Cor.* xv. 43. "It is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory."

This chapter clearly shews the resurrection of the dead, and arguments are brought forward which are very weighty. Paul brings forward the objections that an unbelieving mind would raise against it, such for instance, "How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?" His answer is, "Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die ; the ear is not sowed, but a bare grain ; it dies and then it is quickened, and brings forth fruit according to its nature."

There are some who assert that in heaven the saints of God will differ from each in glory, as the stars, but they have no passage of scripture to prove such a statement ; our bodies are sown in corruption, they shall be raised in incorruption, and thus they will differ in glory from what it was when sown in corruption as the stars. The Lord shall change it and fashion it like unto his glorious body, "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever." Thus it does not appear that the ministers of the gospel who have been the means of turning many to righteousness will outshine those that be wise, or those whom they have turned to righteousness (as instruments in God's hand) ; for these shine as the brightness of the firmament, not as the dark firmament, but as when the sun is up in its meridian splendour, and thus emitting its beams of light on the firmament, and causing it to shine with a glorious

brightness. It does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. And as all who die in Christ, all who are raised in incorruption, raised in glory, will be like him, there will be no difference, for Christ hath not many likenesses.

Some people say there are large souls and small souls. But just notice a babe, it grows, and gradually increases in knowledge, his intellectual faculties become enlarged, but his soul is no greater, or else when he gets old it drops with his body and mental attainments, and becomes as the soul of a little child once more. I believe that the soul of every child who dies in its infancy, will shine as bright and be as great as that of Paul or any of the apostles. "And Jesus took a little child and said, Except ye become as this little child, ye cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven."

All men are in nature, of nature, and by nature, corrupt, "their throat is an open sepulchre." A sepulchre is a place to deposit the dead in, and is generally filled with a stench proceeding from the corrupt bodies, and when it is opened it emits the horrid stench; so is the throat of all by nature. Oh! what wickedness is performed by our bodies; our tongues, what evil have they spoken? our eyes, what lustful, proud, and sinful looks have they committed? Let the glass tell what they have done for the adorning of that body which shall be sown in corruption. Our hands, how have they been laid on that which is unholy, unclean. And feet, how have they run in the way of evil. And after all, our bodies must moulder away in the dust, be food for worms, and become a stench, a nuisance to the living. Then "put on the new man," which is Christ, and put off you will the old man which is sin. There is a difference between you living in sin and sin living in you. This body is actually the seat of all the inventions of Satan, and O how many there are who spend nearly their whole time in washing, dressing, and adorning it. Such little think that at one time it will be raised, not in glory, but to their shame and confusion; the wrath of God shall come upon them, and they shall burn with unquenchable fire. It is sown in dishonour, our bodies are sown in sin, they are vile and polluted; but if changed by the regenerating grace of God, through Christ Jesus our Lord, we shall be raised in glory; and that glory none can describe, "thy God, thy glory." A little exhibition of it took place in the transfiguration of Christ on the Mount, but the glory of Christ was so great that the disciples fell at his feet as dead. But this vile body God will change and fashion it like unto his glorious body, he will raise it in glory; "it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory."

“The foundation of God standeth sure ; having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his.”

A foundation is the basis of an edifice ; hence, when you build, you must have a foundation ; and if you intend your building to stand, it must be a sure, a safe, and a solid foundation, immovable, then will your building be strong. The man who built his house upon a rock, it stood secure against storm and tempest ; but the man who built his house upon the sand, when the floods came and the winds blew, the house fell, and great was the fall thereof. How many in our day build upon an unsound foundation that will not stand the blast of poverty, the power of temptation, floods of errors. But where is the Christian's foundation ? It is in God. And the foundation of God is in Jehovah's purpose and eternal counsel, made sure in the Lord Jesus Christ before the world was. Why is it in Christ ? First, because God the Father laid it there ; and, secondly, He built his church thereon. He laid it in his covenant of grace, “ behold, I make a covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David.” It is in Christ. “ Behold I lay in Sion for a foundation, a stone, elect, precious, and he that believeth in him shall not be confounded.” Christ is the stone, the rock of ages. His people are built upon him ; the apostles and prophets were not the foundation, they preached Christ, they built on Christ as their only sure foundation.

It is laid in the heart of his people, and in order to lay a foundation there must be some digging work to remove the rubbish and filth of the imaginary goodness of man, then a sure foundation will be laid. Thus we are built on Christ, an habitation of God through the Spirit, and will remain so when the world is in a blaze, and through all eternity, because we are well founded, well built, “ He brought me up out of an horrible pit, and out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings.” What do you know of this ? are you upon this rock ? Oh ! fall on God in Christ and wait for his salvation, that when death comes you may say, “ Now Lord let thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.” It is a sealed foundation, and no man can break this seal, but Christ, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, hath prevailed, and he alone can open the seal, *Rev. v. 1—16*. Man may be deceived in the knowledge of God's people, but Christ cannot be deceived, the Lord knoweth them that are his.

“ Come let us reason together, saith the Lord,” &c. Here is a special people addressed, “ a small remnant,” they tremble and fear under a feeling sense of their guilt and utter unworthiness ; but God mercifully calls unto them, saying, “ Come, let us reason together.” Some people think they are as good as their neighbours, and a deal better than some, and thus try to reconcile

themselves ; but unless God brings them to repentance, and teaches them to place entire dependance upon Christ, they will thus deepen their damnation, they will sink deeper and deeper into black despair. The Lord does not say, come pious, come virtuous, &c. The Pharisees have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge ; they being ignorant of God's righteousness, go about to establish their own righteousness, not submitting themselves to the righteousness of God, and thus they delude their own souls. But characters alluded to in our text, feel themselves outcasts of society, and from God ; justice seems to cast them off, law and mercy, all seems against them, to cast them off as sinners. Do you feel it, do you confess it before God, if so, you are precious in his sight.

" A sinner is a sacred thing,
The Holy Ghost hath made him so."

God will appear and save such as feel their need of him ; he came to seek and to save them that were lost. The seeds of iniquity are shown in your heart. Saul of Tarsus, walked according to the law, blameless ; but when God opened his heart, sin revived, and he died ; and sin taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in him all manner of concupiscence ; he felt more deeply lost, his heart was circumcised, and he lay before an heart-searching and rein-trying God, vile, polluted, and miserable. Listen to the nature of the call, " come unto me." How endearing is this word come ! what soul subduing language ! To think that the great eternal three in one should thus affectionately invite poor sinners to come and reason with him. We should think it an act of condescension, if the Queen was to reason with her plebeian subjects, or if a dignified person was to say to a poor, sick, and famishing creature, " come to me, and I will be your friend, I will relieve your distress and comfort you." His or her heart would gladly listen, and leap for joy. But here you see infinite purity standing at the door of mercy, and saying to such as see their desolate state, " come unto me." Then place no hope in what you have done, or what you can do, but come poor sinner just as you are, with your burden of sin and guilt, for says Jesus " Come unto me all ye that weary and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." You stand between love and mercy, law and justice ; of old, the leper had to be taken to the priest before he could be made clean ; you have the leprosy in your heart, and must come to Christ, (who is our high priest after the order of Melchisedec) to be cleansed. Some might ask, how are we to come ? You must be blest with faith, which is of the operation of God the Spirit ; faith in him will lead you to holiness and purity. " The Spirit and the bride say come, let him that heareth say come, he that is athirst come, and whomsoever will let him

come, and take the water of life freely." Here is the Eternal Spirit saying come, and the bride, the Lamb's wife, saying come, and John who heard, and all Christ's ministers says come. Are you thirsting, panting, and groaning for mercy? You are freely invited to come. Are you willing to be saved by grace, and that God shall be gloried in your salvation; then prostrate yourself before him as an helpless sinner, and hope in his mercy, "whosoever will let him come," "thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power," so that there is a lawful coming, and it is to come as a beggar, poor and helpless, maimed, halt, blind, feeling that you have no legs to stand upon, all your earthly props are gone; you then come breathing after mercy, sighing like the prisoner for liberty, to believe; but, say some, I cannot believe; why, you cannot disbelieve; for if some one attacked you and attempted to make you believe there is no God; but he cannot, for what is believing? "To believe that God is, and that he is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him." He is a rein-trying God, and not such a careless judge as some imagine. The Lord draw you, and show you your condition. Ask yourselves. Can you seek refuge anywhere else? Then cry to God for pardon, for Christ the God of your salvation will hear you. "Come let us reason together." This reason is not of a carnal nature; we are not to come before God in our own strength, but in his strength, *i. e.* in Christ who is our strength, and our shield. We must confess our own wretchedness, vileness, and total inability, and God will enable you to reason, as in *Hosea, xiv. ii.* "Take with you words, and turn to the Lord, and say, take away all iniquity and receive us graciously, so will we render the calves of our lips." Jacob wrestled with God, and prevailed, but not in his own strength; but in Christ's strength, had power with God, and prevailed. Moses pleaded with God for the children of Israel, and what were his arguments? He prayed "for the glory of thy great name, save his people, &c." As though he had said the glory of thy great name is at stake. And where is God's great name? It is in Christ. But some in our day say that Christ has done all he can to save sinners; and it only remains for sinners to do their part, and then they will be saved; and then they are so foolish as to pray to God to help them; thus does human reason contradict itself. But this is not the reason God intende. A poor sinner will come like Job, and say, "behold, I am vile, what shall I answer thee." God will answer him, I am thy salvation. He will say, I am unworthy; but God will say, in me thou shalt have peace, &c. And thus he will glorify his name in the hearts of people. Amen.

Habk. i. 12. "Art thou not from everlasting, O Lord, my

God, mine Holy One? we shall not die. O Lord, thou hast ordained them for judgment; and O mighty God, thou hast established them for correction." This is truly the language of faith; to say in faith and feeling, O Lord, my God, is a blessed thing, and also to feel assured that you will not die, Christ says, "because I live, ye shall live also;" and it was on this ground Habakuk built his faith, "art thou not from everlasting?" Some speak about faith as though it was a mere trifle, a bauble, or a toy, and that they could use it as their fleshly nature felt disposed; they could take it up and lay it down at their pleasure; but this is an awful delusion. Such men are entirely ignorant of vital faith; they cannot under such fleshly ideas say conscientiously of God, "thou art my God." They may say he is "*the God*," and even fancy of others, "He is *their* and *your* God;" but the language of our text truly bespeaks the convincing power of precious faith living in the heart. "*My God*."

First, Let us consider the nature and ground of this faith; secondly, the claim faith makes, "*My God*;" thirdly, the conclusion faith comes to, "We shall not die," though we are ordained to judgment and established for correction, and faith seems sometimes at a distance from us, and we ready to say, "Ah, why all this judgment? and why all this correction? why are we thus taken through the furnace of affliction?" Faith anon comes with power, and sees his everlasting security in Christ, and is enabled to draw the blessed conclusion, "We shall not die."

First, The nature and ground of faith. The Pharisee of old thought he had great faith, and talked largely of his goodness, but he was deceiving his own soul, he was unacquainted with the operations of divine faith. While he was thus boasting of his goodness, the poor publican could not say anything, he was as it were struck dumb, and perhaps while thus trembling with fear he was wishing that he was half so good as his friend opposite; but no, he felt that he had no righteousness of his own that he could bring to God, he felt himself destitute of faith, and all that was good, and durst not even so much as lift up his eyes to heaven, but smote upon his breast and groaned out, "God be merciful to me a sinner." Thus we see that vital faith is of such a nature that it stops the mouth from speaking such high flown language as the self righteous, who think that they can pray and believe, and can command all good gifts and graces; all are at their control, they can take them and make use of them or reject them at their pleasure; they are too proud to receive them as gifts, they are offers, and therefore their faith (presumptuous, not vital faith) can act with self-control in these matters; but ah, vital faith cannot swell itself thus big with importance, the wrath is stopped under feelings of their

own sinfulness and helplessness, but the *heart* is enlarged, and is led to taste of the rich bounty which God has provided for his people; and the application of Christ's blood to the wound purifies him, and completes the cure of his malady, as for instance a dreadful sore in the flesh may probably want probing before it can heal on account of the matter that may be in it, and though it is a painful operation it must first be probed, or it will not heal. So it is with the Christian, his false hopes must be rooted up, his fleshly pride brought down, and he must be humbled in the dust under a sense of his lost condition, and his awful malady as a sinner; then the unction of the Spirit, the blood of the Lamb, "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth him from all sin;" it cures *all* his malady, not a tittle is left for us to manufacture, or work out a part of the cure by good deeds, &c. What! some will say, "will not piety in us, charity to all mankind, and love to our neighbours, make us pure in his sight, and blot out those stains of sin and guilt?" No, for the cure is impure, and nothing less than divine unction will effect the cure. This then is the nature of faith; and now notice the ground of faith.

God hath taken a solemn oath in making the covenant for his people that they should all be saved in the seed of Abraham, "and because he could swear by no greater he swore by himself," thus confirming his engagement with an oath; and faith rests there, feeling that Christ is his only Saviour by covenant love; and though sin assail the believer, and sometimes he doubts and fears, yet, eventually, he is brought to see that Christ is for him, and such as him only, for there can be not Christ but for sinners, his atoning blood is the only basis whereon he can rest his soul, which is his only ground of faith.

Secondly, The claim faith makes. We have noticed the language of faith, and now that we may better illustrate our meaning on this head, let us compare it to the husband and wife. While the husband is at home with his wife she can converse with him, and his soothing language will cheer her spirits and console her in her trying moments by his unremitting kind attentions, thus they sweetly commune together and enjoy each other's company. She needs not then the exercise of faith to believe that she has a kind and affectionate husband. But, suppose he is away to a distant where the troubled seas roll between them, and during his absence there should arise storms and tempests, this may cause the anxious loving wife much trouble, and she is ready to believe her husband lost—she a widow and destitute. This apparent transition of her circumstances and situation requires the exercise of faith to believe that he is yet a tender and loving husband, and though billows roll between them, his mind is fixed on her, and he

loves her still. This seems to have been the case with Jerusalem; God had for a while hid his face, and they were desolate of comfort, all was wretchedness and misery; but, amidst these trying circumstances, the prophet is enabled, by faith, to look to God, believing that He is from everlasting my Lord and my God, mine Holy one, therefore they should not die; he not only desires to know God as the God of nature, the God of Providence, and the God of Grace, but as his *own* God.

Thirdly, The conclusion faith comes to, "We shall not die," thou hast ordained them for judgment and established them for correction. This may refer, first, to the designs of Providence; secondly, to the wicked; thirdly, to the people of God.

First, The designs of Providence. How prone is human nature to repine at the dispensation of Providence—if they are poor, they wish to be rich—if they are rich, they are tormented by the poor—if one is bereaved of a member of his family, he repines at his loss—if he is sick, he frets and desires to be soon well—if he experiences hardships, he is impatient and murmurs. How few consider that sin has brought all these troubles into the world, that even the ground is cursed for man's sake, and that man is born to trouble, and must live by the sweat of his brow. O, could men but look to the Lord, whose ever watchful eye surveys our every action, and who does not willingly afflict the children of men, then would they cease their murmuring. See the rebellious children of Israel, although the Lord led them by a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night, and conducted them dry shod through the red sea, and sent them bread to eat and water to drink; yet, notwithstanding, they murmured, and remembered the flesh pots of Egypt, and "the Lord bore with their manners in the wilderness forty years." Thus are the dispensations of Providence ordained for judgment and established for correction.

Secondly, It may refer to the wicked. God is all wise, and just and good, and all things are ordained by him in the counsels of Providence, for a wise purpose. "He knoweth the end from the beginning." "He hath made all things for himself, even the wicked for the day of evil." It is wise, just, and good, that in this world there should be vice. This is revolting to human nature; but were there no vice, there would be no virtue; the wicked condemneth virtue, or their malicious project would not exist.

But they will one day have to stand before the awful tribunal of a just and holy God, the Judge of all—their actions will be weighed in a balance, and if found wanting, the awful sentence, "depart from me ye workers of iniquity, I never knew you," will be pronounced against them, and they will be hurled from

the presence of Jehovah, to spend eternity in everlasting punishment; they are thus ordained for judgment and established for correction.

Thirdly, It refers to the people of God. The people of God are indeed a peculiar people, their ways and their experience, their language and their opinions are peculiarly different to those of other men. They are the third part which shall be brought through the fire, the fiery trial of affliction; "through much tribulation, they must enter the kingdom." The nominal professor and profane are both estranged from God. A life of ease, a calm undisturbed mind is all they desire, "the wicked have no hands in their death, their are not plagued like other men." The profane delight in sin, "the fear of God is not before their eyes," *Rom. iii.* But the people of God have troubles on every side, from without and from within, they are often perplexed and doubt, and feel the plague of sin and their evil heart; they loathe the pleasures of this world and the evils thereof, they die daily, and how can they who are dead to sin, live any longer therein, "they wade through judgments and corrections, and thus become cleansed from the dross and tin of their corrupt nature, and purified by the blood of Jesus, even as He is pure."

PILGRIMAGE.

MY DEAR BROTHER IN OUR MOST DEAR AND GLORIOUS LORD,—The name of the God of Israel defend thee, and with the fire of his love kindle in your heart delight in and communion with him.

Think me not unmindful of my promise in not writing earlier, indeed I have had many things to hinder, and since my return my health has been in that sad state that scarcely a day passes but I am oppressed with the most violent headache; yet, glory to my *exalted Saviour, he, my living head*, supports me, and it is *his* presence alone can cheer my oft drooping spirits. What a mercy I am out of hell, and oh, what a mercy I have a hope of glory, yes, a hope founded in blood, maintained by the constant operations of divine grace, and full of immortality—a *prisoner of hope still*. Though I can daily embrace and heartily believe in the great doctrines of grace, yet I am more than ever assured I can be of no real benefit to the *Lord's people*, but as I am constantly exercised in the fire or flood, and wherever the Lord hath people he will send his ministers. Jeremiah was sent into the *north*, and Paul and Silas into the prison, because of a message *there* to be delivered; and so it continues—God sent us into the *water*, the *fire*, the *sieve*, the *wilderness*, the *battle*, the *stripping room*, and the *dismal dungeon of desertion*, that we may know

experimentally how to speak seasonably and feelingly to those of his choosing in these places.

Now, my dear brother, I know not the state of your mind, but if not in all, it is not impossible but what you may be in one of these places, and the idea of knowing—first, it is the footsteps of the flock; secondly, the place where God hath chosen his church; thirdly, the school of instruction where we learn that God dealeth with us as with sons; and, fourthly, the place where we are fitted to comfort them that mourn a knowledge of these things, tends to reconcile the mind, and through faith in a *faithful covenant performing God*, we are taught, and at times cheerfully, to prefer those most trying dispensations to the easy and unprofitable path of those men who do not profit the saints of God. I sometimes reflect upon the men-made divines of the present refined age, and I ask myself the question, wouldest thou change states with such, and possess their ease, their *affluence*, their *fame*, their *respectability*, and at last their *fiery* ruin? ah, no; in my worst, my darkest and most distressing season, through grace, with dear old Hart I sing,—

“Boast not, ye sons of earth,
Nor look with scornful eyes
Above your highest mirth;
My saddest hours I prize,
For though my cup seem filled with gall,
There’s something secret sweetens all.”

This secret something, O how sweet! who can fully set it forth! What is this secret! is it everlasting love. The root of the matter, faith in Jesus, hope in his death, a sense of his faithfulness, intercourse with heaven, or the witness of the spirit,—say, my brother, is it not all these combined and sealed with the Spirit’s unction! then rejoice; though we have our secret conflicts, fears, suspicions, and dismal forebodings, we have our secret resources of consolation, fear nots, and sweet assurances of victory, our sin within us, Satan our tempter, the world our tormentor, the *monster self* our burden and our shame, with all that beset us, in this wilderness state, glory, glory, glory; having redemption in the blood of the lamb, we possess in him salvation with eternal glory; then join with me in one strain more.

“Yet a season and we know
Happy entrance must be given,
All our sorrows left below.
And earth exchanged for Heaven.”

Blessed change, soon may it take place, amen. Hallelujah to the lamb. This morning’s post brought me two letters, one from a member of our church, acknowledging the kindness of God in blessing my poor ministry; the other was from a father and a daughter, for which I feel very thankful; the Lord bless them, illumine, console, strengthen, and shine upon them as the sun of

righteousness; and these things will make it blessed indeed. Yes, they shall say the *winter* of *unregeneracy*, of *natural darkness*, of *the law*, the *sting of death*, and wrath of God is past, no more to return; yea, the winter of desertion and conflict shall soon pass away, for an eternal summer and a cloudless sky. I am about leaving my present residence; what a moving world is this, while here *we dwell in tents*, and I am prone to forget they *are moveable things*. O, how often I am building *among the stars*, and raising a *noble edifice in fancy*. God Almighty bless and keep you daily, your wife, your children, and the saints, in holy fellowship. Most affectionately remember me to M. Gadsby and family. My wife unites in kind love to all the friends. Adieu; grace and peace be multiplied, and may every real good be showered upon you, is the hearty prayer of your unworthy but sincere friend and brother in the path of tribulation,

Plymouth, Oct. 8, 1823.

D. D.

WATERS OF AFFLICTION.

MESSRS. EDITORS.—I am glad to find from the December number of the *Ambassador*, that it is your intention to go on with the work, and I trust you will be encouraged and meet with many a lift along the road; that the work has hitherto been made useful to many of the Lord's children, there is not a doubt, and that many of the sheep and not a few of the lambs of the flock, have again and again been refreshed by the way, is also placed beyond a doubt; and I do believe that the ensuing year will yet be more abundantly blessed, as the fallow ground is now in some measure broken up, and many of the Lord's family, who are not able to hear a living minister, are glad to purchase such a work as the "Gospel Ambassador."

The first article in the October number, called "A Word by the Way," is a letter that I penned under peculiar circumstances, and great anxieties of mind; but notwithstanding this, the Lord has been pleased to own and bless it to some poor child in similar circumstances.

My path at that time was dark and intricate, and I felt the need of the mercy of the Lord, then, but my situation now and the circumstances with which I am surrounded, are still darker and mysterious; indeed, I am almost overwhelmed with grief and afflictions in my family; it hath pleased the Lord since I last wrote to you, in his mysterious providence, to take from me, at least for a time, my dear wife, under circumstances of a most distressing nature; the Lord hath been pleased to lay upon her, a very heavy affliction; indeed, it is one of the greatest afflictions the human family are subject, namely, deprivation of her reasoning faculties; but I trust even under this painful cir-

cumstance, the Lord will be with her, and grant if it be his blessed will, lucid moments, and that it may please him to bless the means for her recovery, and that in mercy he will look upon her, and restore her to her disconsolate family in his own time, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed in her right mind. That she knew the Lord, and rejoiced in the God of her salvation, I am well satisfied; that the Lord has owned and blest the word of life to her soul, and loves her with an everlasting love, are matters to my mind quite certain, and that the present heavy affliction is for her ultimate good; of this I feel assured, and I am constrained to say with Job "The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord," and also with the poet—

" They may on the main of temptation be toss'd,
 Their sorrows may swell as the sea,
 But none of the ransom'd shall ever be lost,
 The righteous shall hold on his way."

Thus at present my path is in deep water, the Lord hides his face from me, I am shut up and cannot come forth, I cry unto the Lord, but he shutteth out my prayer, clouds and darkness are round about him. Under this painful dispensation, my earnest desire is to look to the Lord, to trust in the Lord, to pray to the Lord, to cry unto God, who heareth the groaning of the prisoner—"Teach me thy way, O Lord; I will walk in thy truth; unite my heart to fear thy name." *Psalm lxxxvi, v. 11.*

"Is anything too hard for the Lord." No, he hath all worlds at his immediate command, and can turn the hearts of kings and rulers whithersoever he will, and all the glory shall redound to his blessed name.

Since the absence of my dear partner, my mind has been most deeply exercised, and I am apt to reason thus:—Lord I feel certain that I am one of thy dear family, that Christ died for me, I feel a secret assurance I have the witness of the Holy Spirit bearing witness with my spirit, that I am included in the one hundred and forty four thousand, and shall ultimately sing the song of Moses and the Lamb, that my name is recorded in the Lamb's Book of Life, yea more, that my name was placed in the book of life before the foundation of the world. The enemy comes in and says, yes, your name may be in the book of life, but do you not fear that it may be blotted out; not the least fear about it whatever. God the Father will not erase it, nor will God the Son, nor will the Holy Spirit the blessed testifier of, and witness to my soul; these are blessed truths, blessed realities; precious, precious, is the name of Jesus; I try to love him more and more every day, but I know this, I shall never be able to love him as he does me. Christ loves his children with an infinite love, my love is finite, yet notwithstanding this

great Scripture, there are men who come forward and assert and who call themselves ministers of God ; but I am fully satisfied they are the devil's ministers after all ; these men assert that God the Father needeth not the praises of his Saints, but that he is infinitely happy without them ; that the Lord Jesus Christ does not require the praises of his saints to increase his happiness. But Solomon by the Holy Ghost speaks very differently, " Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth ; and my delights were with the sons of men." *Prov. viii. 31.* The dear redeemer comes to us with infinite delight, leaping and skipping upon the hills, God the Father loves his children with an Almighty love, the Holy and blessed Spirit loves them with the same love. When God created the world and all the planetary orbs with all their vast and numerous host of celestial bodies, he created them by himself ; when Christ effected the work of redemption by fulfilling the law, putting an end to the curse, putting sin everlastingly away—*he did it by himself* ; but God will not enjoy heaven by himself, he must have his children with him ; mark the language " Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am ; that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me ; for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." *John xvii. v. 24.* Thus you see the assertion of these men-made parsons falls to the ground, and that what they assert is from their own empty heads and destitute hearts ; no real love to the truth, no food for the sheep, no pitcher of water for the flock to drink out of by the way ; some of them seem to have a pitcher, but then there is no water in it, and the poor sheep wait and pant a long time after for a draught of water, but get none, and thus you see these men-made ministers are entirely out of the secret ; they have no desire to feed the flock, their chief aim is to feed themselves. I lately met with three of this class ; having occasion to go into Buckinghamshire, I went to hear one of this kind, a Baptist he called himself, but poor man he was as dark as night, the chapel was not half filled, nor did I wonder at it, every thing looked cold and dismal, he spoke about half an hour and heartily glad was I when he finished, for I was very hungry (spiritually), but he gave me not meat, his pitcher was either dry or had holes in the bottom ; he said a good deal about human piety and doings of the creature, but not a word about the finished work of Christ ; in the afternoon, I went to an Independent Chapel, I think it is called, and independent enough sure it was, the sermon was all about human goodness and human doings, from first to last, and glad enough was I when the long winded preacher sat down and closed the scene ; the poor clerk was awful. Well, in the evening a very clever man was going to preach at the same chapel, a Mr. Watson, I think, who is

PR

ANSWER TO THE ABOVE.

We are not sure that we know the meaning of the above two verses ; all we can do therefore is to give merely our *opinion*, which opinion may be right or it may be wrong ; our correspondent must therefore take our remarks as we intend them, expressive only of our opinion.

Many are the opinions of men upon these Scriptures. Some think the Lord was wrath with Moses and threatened his life, because he had not circumcised the child, but we see no authority for this opinion. Circumcision was neglected in the wilderness, and was not renewed until the Israelites entered Canaan, as may be seen, *Joshua v.* We do not therefore think that the Lord was so far wrath with Moses, on this occasion, as to seek to kill him.

Then again some have thought that the words of Zipporah to Moses, simply mean that he was unto her a husband by blood, and that she herein had reference to Christ and the church ; but *we* think the words of Zipporah are expressive of passion and anger, and of any feeling but that of a spiritual kind.

We are aware (*Gen. xvii. 14*) that excommunication was to be inflicted where circumcision was neglected ; but still this law was not always enforced, as we see in the case of (*Josh. v. 5.*) the children born in the wilderness.

We do not, therefore, think that the Lord was on this occasion so wrath with Moses as to seek to kill either him or the child ; nor do we think the words of Zipporah have any reference to Christ and the church.

Our opinion is, that it was only in *appearance*, or in the *apprehension* of Moses, that the Lord sought to kill him : our reasons for this opinion are,

First,—Because the notion was then prevalent, that any special manifestation of God was death to those included in that revelation. *Gen. xxii. 30* ; *Judges, xxiii* ; *Judges, xiii. 22.* May not this sentiment have prevailed at this time with Moses, and that he spoke not as things were in *reality*, but as they were in *appearance*.

Secondly,—This view of this matter agrees with many of the Lord's dealings with his people. Witness Job, Jonah, Jeremiah, and many more ; wherein the Lord has so dealt with them, as though he intended to destroy them. At this destruction they have trembled, until they have seen the end of the Lord ; how that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy.

Thirdly,—Are not such experience, apprehension, and conclusions, common among the people of God in the present day. Will not soul distresses, powerful temptations, and strong inclinations thereto, together with adverse winds in temporal matters—will not these things often produce hard thoughts of God, and lead a believer to write bitter things against himself.

Fourthly,—If the Lord seek in a way of chastisement, the life of any one of his children, how easily can he establish his counsel, as in the case of Eli; as the man of God, slain by a lion, as also the Corinthians.

Fifthly,—He had a *great work* for Moses to do, and is it likely therefore that he in reality sought to kill him. We think not, but only in *appearance*. How common is it with us to judge from the appearance of things, and how often has the Lord exceeded all our expectations in being gracious unto us. So whenever we

“ Judge the Lord by feeble sense,”

Instead of

“ Trusting him for his grace,”

We are pretty sure to be wrong. Our opinion, then, we repeat, is, that the Lord sought to kill Moses only in *appearance*, but *not* in reality.

The words of Zipporah, we think, arose from a twofold feeling,

First, From affection to the child. She was a hardy woman of the desert, and the affection of such to their children is generally very strong, almost, and sometimes quite outrageous. Such was the affection of good old Sarah to her little Isaac; they are not quite so easy over it as our soft, formal, almost moveless mortals of the drawing room, *called* ladies; no, their affection is full of life and power.

Zipporah being alive in all this determined love to the *little one*, this naturally brought another feeling, namely, that of hatred to a rite which inflicted pain, and, in her view, endangered the child's life; and so offended was she with Moses, that she would not trust him to circumcise the child, but did it herself.

We think Zipporah's life and feelings were too much bound up in the lad's life to think of any thing spiritual; yet, rather than the Lord should kill Moses, she will circumcise the child, for it is likely she participated in the *apprehension* that the Lord sought to kill Moses, but still it very much lowered Moses in her view *at the time*; but when it was found that the little one was not injured, and that circumcision was a rite of honour and belonged to a holy covenant—that Abraham and his household of men servants were circumcised, and that we ought to obey God rather than men; and that God is good, and that he intended by the command, not evil to the child, but good; and that Moses was not a cruel husband, but a meek and holy man of God—when these things came to be understood, no doubt Moses was again received into favour, and treated very kindly and properly. What thousands of unpleasantnesses take place only for want of a little more *clearness of understanding*.

We think the circumstances upon which we have thus given our *opinion*, when looked into, very instructive.

First,—We see in it, *perhaps*, a blameable neglect in Moses in not circumcising the child before; but, still, we hardly know whether it be right to attach much blame to him in this matter, for Zipporah being, as she evidently was, a somewhat self-willed determined woman, and Moses being in her father's house and service, could not perhaps get an opportunity to circumcise the child. The women were so refractory in the time of Ahasuerus, that a public decree, and that according to the law of the Medes and Persians which altereth not, was needful to give right that *every man should bear rule in his own house, Est. i. 22*. This consideration may somewhat lessen the blame otherwise attaching to Moses in this matter.

Secondly,—We see in this circumstance, that such a man even as Moses could be, and was the subject of groundless fear, a man of like passions with us.

Thirdly,—We see how ready poor blind fallen nature is to oppose the commands of God; but Zipporah, like Naaman, came afterward, no doubt, to her right mind.

Fourthly,—The necessity of seeking wisdom of him who giveth liberally, and upbraideth not. Eds.

ENQUIRY.

MR. EDITOR,—I am truly glad to find that you intend to continue the *Gospel Ambassador*, for I know that the work is highly appreciated by many who know and love the truth. But my chief object in writing to you is, to ask for an elucidation of *Psalm, cxxxix. 15, 16*. Yours in the truth, J. B.

ANSWER TO THE ABOVE.

First, The Lord's *perfect* acquaintance with the creatures he has made, his omnipresence, the mysterious structure of body and mind shewn in mankind, the praise to which hereby is due to God, are the things set forth in the letter of this Psalm.

Secondly, Some have thought these two verses, 15th and 16th, refer especially to Christ and the church; under this view they mean that his substance is both his manhood and mystic body, the church; his being made in secret and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth, will mean that his manhood was formed by the immediate power of God, and that in the lowest or humblest circumstances; and the Lord's eyes were upon the progressive formation of this Holy Child Jesus. All were, as it were, written in God's book, and all which in continuance, or in due time and order were fashioned, when as yet here was nothing of this matter visible to man; he was not known by carnal men *after* he was born, much less *before* he was born.

Thirdly, And if these words be taken as referring to the mystical body of Christ, then the meaning will be this,—that these

were with God virtually from eternity, and that they were formed and set in order in the secret counsels of his love; while the lowest parts of the earth may denote the depths of death into which the Saviour went for their redemption. By his death in these depths they were united, and virtually for ever formed, while the eyes of the Lord are upon them in the progress of actual formation, being yet imperfect, yet all written in the book of life; but in due time and order they will be fashioned; while as yet there is none of them known to the world, the world knoweth them not.

Fourthly,—And if we apply the words to regeneration, being created in Christ Jesus, then we still get another meaning. Thus, the substance essential to make a new creature in Christ Jesus, was not hid from the Lord; the forms, ceremonies, and doings of men are in this matter worse than nothing, as being but a delusive substitute for the quickening, and all creative *power* of God. The one thing needful is not hidden from him.

Regeneration is a new formation in secret. “It was made in secret,” it is the beginning of the secret which is with the righteous, with them that fear God.

The lowest parts of the earth is explained by the words, he remembered us in our *low* estate, for his mercy endureth for ever; here, in this low estate, he finds them, and here, in these lowest parts of the earth, they are brought under his skilful hand, curiously wrought for a better place and state; now he that hath wrought us for the self-same thing, and hath anointed us, is God.

The Lord’s eyes are over the righteous, they being yet imperfect, but will be presented perfect at last. Every gift, power, and blessing essential to their completeness is noted down, written in Heaven, not one good thing will fail. They will each, in continuance, continuing to live upon the best things, grow on into the fashion and form, and reality of a perfect man in Christ; when as yet they are the Lord’s hidden ones, none of them being truly known to the natural man; for the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

Thus we are disposed to think, that these two verses will bear, and do contain this fourfold meaning.

First,—Our natural Creation.

Secondly,—The manhood of Christ.

Thirdly,—His mystical body, the Church.

Fourthly,—Our *new* Creation in Christ Jesus.

These several meanings all make room, one for the other, and do not fall out by the way.

Eds.

THE
GOSPEL AMBASSADOR;
OR,
Christian Pilgrim's Friend.

"Blessed are the poor in Spirit, for their's is the kingdom of Heaven," *Mat. v. 3.*

"The Election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded," *Rom. xi. 7.*

No. 2.

FEBRUARY 1, 1847.

Price 2d.

**THE SOUND OF THE TRUMPET AND THE ALARM
OF WAR.**

"Thou hast heard, O my soul, the sound of the trumpet and the alarm of war."

If not expressed in so many words, yet is this the language in substance, of a child of God when awakened to a sensibility of his sinnership, and to an apprehension of the righteous indignation of Jehovah, as revealed against all ungodliness. The law of God, in all its inflexibility and righteous demands, and justice determined to vindicate its righteous claims, stands in battle array, declaring war against every thing that stands opposed to truth. "Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the King's enemies; whereby the people fall under thee."

When once the arrow of truth has entered, extraction, by human means, is impossible; the soul, under these circumstances, may attempt to go into the world again, and like the harpooned whale, dive into the depths of darkness, to get rid of pain, endeavouring to stifle conscience, and cast off the convictions which have been produced by the Holy Spirit, much against the fleshly will, and adopt the language of the literal remnant of Judah, saying, "We will not dwell in this land, no! but we will go into the land of Egypt, where we shall see no war, nor hear the sound of the trumpet, nor have hunger of bread, and there will we dwell." In carrying this resolution into effect, the famine and the sword invariably follow; for so saith the Lord, "for the sword which ye feared, shall overtake you there in the land of Egypt, and the famine whereof ye were afraid, shall follow close after you there in Egypt, and there shall ye die." Die to every hope of escape by your own exertions, die to every thing like prospect of salvation by creature thoughts, or creature actions, and be in just such a state, as to need feelingly the outstretched arm of sovereign mercy, and the reve-

lation to the soul of the sinners' interposer, friend and Saviour, in whom the sword of justice finds a sheath, the clamorous law a fulfilment, and by whom the war trumpet lies in silence on the battle field.

Here let me anticipate the enquiry of the reader, What do you know about these things in your own soul? And how did you first become acquainted with the same? I confess that I generally feel a degree of diffidence, in speaking of myself, and my experience of divine things, because I know that it is small, and comparatively insignificant, when contrasted with the revelation that is made to the souls of some of the family of God; but such as it is, I will declare it, and though it be small, yet if it be real, it is a mercy. Half a sovereign is as much gold in its nature, as a sovereign is, and though it may be lacking in quantity, yet if its quality be good it will stand; and it may be remembered, that a half sovereign of real gold, is of more worth than a £50 forged note. The former may be tested by all possible means, it will remain gold still, whether it be filed, or burned, yea, or even melted, it cannot be altered in its nature.

However, as the question has been asked, and as I have been several times as a contributor before the readers of the *Ambassador*, perhaps a brief outline may be opportune.

It was therefore early in life, that I was made to hear the sound of the trumpet, and the alarm of war, for when engaged one Lord's-day afternoon in some childish sports on the banks of the river Thames, condemnation sounded in my conscience, as a breaker of God's holy law. God in the terribleness of his majesty, appeared as a punisher of sin, and this made me afraid; yea, tremblingly afraid; and although that did not prevent me from sinning again and again, in the same way, yet I could not do so with impunity, or without having it recorded on my conscience. That the trumpet and the alarm of war sounded in my ears, one or two facts subsequently experienced, will serve to shew. All my relations being worldly people, (although occasionally attending a place of worship,) I on Sabbath days accompanied them in their pleasures and pursuits, but I can truly say, that those pleasures were turned generally into sorrows to me, in consequence of the consciousness that I was the subject of, that I was sinning against God, and by the fear of the consequences of the same. Upon one occasion, we went to Richmond on Sunday, on an excursion in a boat; on our return home a violent storm of thunder and lightning arose, we ran on a bank and were nearly all upset; although naturally timid of stormy weather, yet my fears on this occasion, arose more from a knowledge of God, as being angry with the wicked every day, than from any thing else; and I believe that I was the only one

in the boat, who was the subject of such anxieties. I heard "the sound of the trumpet and the alarm of war." On another occasion, Sunday afternoon, (being winter,) I went in company with a near and dear relation to slide and skate upon the ice. The moment I went on, these words came to me with convincing power, attended with horror of feeling: "*The way of transgressors is hard.*" I have never forgotten the words, I felt them to be a reproof, and a rebuke, and although it did not please the Lord to withhold me from sinning against him from time to time in this way, yet would he not allow me to settle down comfortably in these things, but sounded the trumpet and the alarm of war in my conscience, so that I trembled again and again. Passing by many circumstances in which the trumpet sounded in connection with lying, swearing, and other things, I confine myself to another circumstance connected with the Sabbath day. A journey into the country to visit some friends, was contemplated and carried out. I had anticipated a deal of pleasure, but here again was I spoiled by the sound of the "Trumpet," and found that I was seeking pleasure in a way opposed to God's law; I believe I was the only one in company, concerned about soul matters, and I now believe that the Lord's eye was upon me for good, "Preserved in Christ Jesus." The whole of the day from the time that we went out until we returned at night, more or less quickly did these words follow me, and I could not shake them off, "If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath from doing thy pleasure on my holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord honourable and shall honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasures, nor speaking thine own words; then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord, and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."

Long as this scripture is, and although I had not remembered reading the words with any particular attention, yet did they come to me with all that clearness and force, and that repeatedly, and made as clear an impression on my mind as though a person were articulating them in my ears, and following me at the same time. And being convinced in my soul of my want of conformity to them; yea, that I was the very reverse of what they expressed; they were indeed to me "the sound of the trumpet, and the alarm of war." I felt that I deserved the wrath of God to be poured out—I had no plea to offer; the truth of that scripture was experienced by me, "Every mouth shall be stopped." I knew nothing of Jesus Christ—nothing of God's salvation—was as ignorant of his methods of mercy as the Hindoo barbarian, who prostrates himself before the car of

Juggernaut; I only knew in the light of God's commandments that I was a sinner, and a great one, though comparatively young in years. I had now left the house of my parents, and was serving an apprenticeship at a distance therefrom, exposed more than ever to temptations of every sort; the public house, the theatres, and the concert room were in turn visited, yet the sound of the trumpet followed me wherever I went, and in whatever I did. But the time was at hand when that scripture was to be fulfilled with regard to myself. "Thou shalt arise and have mercy upon Sion, for the time to favour her, yea, the set time is come."

The prey is to be effectually taken from the mighty, and the lawful captive is to be delivered. Satan is not much longer to have and to lead captive according to his will into every foolishness, while God's law is condemning every step, for the *last time* that I was permitted to go to any of these trumpety concerts, I was seized with an extraordinary horror of feeling (the sound of the trumpet), I could not attend to the pleasures of the party; there was no seat on which I could sit, nor corner in which I could stand, not because the place was full, but because the place was too hot, and the seats lined with prickling thorns. I rushed out of the place, and ran home to my lodgings, lay down on my bed, and knew not what to do; the alarm of war in my conscience was great, and I had no hope other than that which resolution to pursue a different course could afford. I endeavoured to pray, but had not the spirit of prayer. I resolved to attend a place of worship, not only on Sundays, as was my custom, (and perhaps the theatre on Monday,) but on week evenings also, with resolves to be better and to do better; and the ministers that I was in the habit of hearing quite coincided in their preaching with this resolve, being ministers of the letter and not of the Spirit. But I could not settle down in this, but went from place to place, thinking that I heard better here, and then better there, and could indeed find no resting place, and felt that I was destitute of the "one thing needful;" that is, the "*right religion*," without knowing, however, what it was. How earnestly did I wish that I could get to live or lodge with some people who were in possession of this, that I, perchance, might possess it too. And, here I behold the wisdom and goodness of a covenant God, and desire ever to praise his holy name for his wondrous works to a weak, ignorant, unworthy, and rebellious sinner, for just at this time he, in his providence, brought a young man, named James Betts, (who had been previously made acquainted with the truth, this *right religion*, that I longed for,) to work in the same shop in which I was employed; after some little time, and having had conversation to-

gether, he perceived, I suppose, or thought he perceived, life, although he found me very dark in my mind. He, however, invited me to accompany him to hear the minister that he was favoured to hear from time to time; to this I readily agreed, and was glad of the offer; for without knowing any thing about sentiments, as professed by different denominations, I was glad to have the opportunity of hearing his minister. I accordingly went with him to hear Mr. James Wells, of the Surrey Tabernacle, Borough Road, London, and there was in that ministry, to me, an indescribable something, which differed so much from any thing that I had ever heard before, that I was astonished. He was reading a chapter in Proverbs, and commenting thereon, and dwelt upon these words, "It is better to dwell in the corner of a house-top, than with a brawling woman and in a wide house."

The brawling woman was *free-will*; and the wide house was *universal charity*; the house-top was the *sovereignty of God*, and explained why and wherefore it was better to dwell in the latter than in the former. Now this laid the axe to the root of all my preconceived notions of theology, which might be summed up in these two ideas, that is, that the Lord Jesus Christ died for every body, and that every body might be saved if he would, although nearly 15 years' experience of felt helplessness had not been sufficient to convince my judgment that free-will was false. The sovereignty of God was a subject I knew nothing about, although a subject of it, but had never heard it spoken of before. This however worked in my mind like leaven. I went again, when Mr. W. was dwelling upon the helplessness of the creature, the depravity of his nature, and his entire unworthiness by virtue of sin and union to Adam the fallen. This fitted like mortice and tenon, and I could enter feelingly into the truths advanced, for I was a subject of the same things; and this was the first time that I ever heard an experimental sermon, or had any reason to believe that I was in the right path. But the minister did not stop here, for having spoken of depravity, he went on to state things that I had never heard of, things that did my soul good, "A fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness, to the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem." Not of helplessness merely, but of "Help that is laid on one that is mighty." That it was the design of the triune God, an expression of the Father's love, and wrought in the soul by the Holy Ghost; that the acts of God were eternal, once done, done for ever; that his purposes of grace were as immutable as his own character. All of which entered my soul, and was sweeter to me than honey or the honey-comb. I had no need now to enquire which is the right

religion, for this brought with it its own evidence—made a way for itself; and truly was that scripture exemplified in my experience, “The entrance of thy words giveth light, it giveth understanding to the simple;” and proves another declaration of holy writ, “He is abundantly willing to shew unto the heirs of promise, the immutability of his counsel.” I felt as sensibly the veil of ignorance removed from my understanding, as though a person had removed a covering from before my literal eyes. I have sometimes compared the change experienced, to that of coming up out of a dark vault, in which I have been incarcerated all my life time, into the broad day-light. “He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death, and brake their bands asunder.”

On another occasion, Mr. W. preached from these words, “Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory.” To describe the pleasure of soul that I experienced under that sermon, human language is insufficient; the two disciples under the same circumstances could not express it; all they could say, was, “Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us by the way, and opened to us the scriptures.” For when the minister spoke of the glorious person of Jesus in his complexity and qualification for suffering; the work of Jesus in all its important branches; the necessity of it, and the glory of Jesus in the consummation of it;—I say, these things won my affections, and bound my soul fast, while in another sense, they set my soul at liberty to adore and praise his holy and blessed name. In going home after the service, so full was my soul of blessedness, arising from the discovery of the pearl of greatest price, that I literally leaped as an hart, and the distance, three or more miles, was as nothing; and such I believe is the effect generally produced, more or less, when the truth is received in the soul in the love of it.

Thus, then, O my soul, not only hast thou heard the sound of the trumpet, and the alarm of war in the instances named, and many more besides; but thou hast also heard the sound of another trumpet, and the proclamation of peace, by and through the effectual victories of the prince of peace. The great trumpet that Isaiah predicted should be blown, and they shall come (saith he,) which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord in the Holy Mount at Jerusalem. The sound of this trumpet is a joyful sound, every note of it echos love eternal, mercy free, power great, and salvation everlasting. “Blessed are the people that know the joyful sound; they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance.”

Swanscombe.

I. C. J.

ELECTION.

TO JOHN WARBURTON.

DEAR BROTHER,—I received your letter, and am now going to answer it—but what shall I say? I feel at a loss to know. I perceive by your letter that your sight is clear; you look a long way back, and see a great way forward. As to myself, my eyes seem to be downward, and you know what a poor figure a man makes in describing heavenly objects when he looks as if he had stolen every word he says. My experience in divine things has been very gloomy. I have long laid in the county gaol, and lived on short allowance. I thought at first, when I came here, to have refused all prison allowances, but the Lord never minds our pettish tricks; he knows that the meat will keep, and that by and by he will have the honour of hearing us crying for our frames and feelings; but as these are not allowed in prison, he withholds them till we are glad to beg for prison allowances, a morsel of hope flowing from the finished work of Jesus; and the Lord knows I have endeavoured to push away all the precious settlements of God and his covenant characters without—I must have them warmed by the zeal and animation of my own feelings; indeed I use to imagine, when they were ministerially and sensibly set upon the table, that I ate nothing else but the very marrow of the doctrines and relationships, and covenant engagements, electing and discriminating love of God; but to my surprise, when I thought I was eating the very marrow of those truths, I was only looking at them, and living upon frames and feelings. Indeed, John, I do assure you to have Christ as a rock, I find I must be stripped of all self and self dependance, must feel my frames to wither like the herb, and then be brought naked to Christ, and fall upon him, or rather be pushed upon him,—he is precious.

No sweet taste of Christ's love by the way, if no election. After our rebellion, our agreement with hell, our fighting against this very doctrine, our risings of lusts, and burning, scorching, hell-deserving temptations and inclinations, slips and slides—if it was not for sovereign, electing love, could either a Greenhough or a Warburton expect to feel the presence of God again? No; if no electing love, no peace, no joy, no rest, no hope, no anchorage, no salvation. But there is electing, unchangeable love, and because of this truth we again are revived after all our ingratitude; indeed the Lord takes sovereign methods with his people to teach them the beauty and excellency of truth.

As it respects my feelings, you have them fully described in *Job, xxxix*; for I used to think great darkness, when in fact I

had in measure the light of his countenance; in darkness, I used to think Christ and all his unction was gone, because I did not feel such a measure of it as to make my soul move without crying out. But the fact was, the dew was all this time on the *branch*, but the night seasons I have been in since; while God has been teaching me doctrine, not only made my soul tremble, but heavily groan, as if all the wheels would break for want of unction; for there is unction in truth, and unless it be felt and enjoyed, the truth is dry.

G. GREENOUGH.

SKETCHES OF SERMONS BY W. GADSBY.

ON PETER'S FALL.

The weakness of man is very great, compared with the Almighty God, his creator and upholder; he is at his best estate altogether vanity, he is weakness itself; we are not sufficient of ourselves so as to do anything of ourselves; we know not even what to pray unto God for as we ought. May we in humility pray unto him to direct us how to pray and what to pray for, to hold us up in his righteous ways, to keep us weak in ourselves; for when we are thus weak, then are we strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, to keep our eyes from beholding vanity, and our feet from the very shadow of evil. For most eminent men have been left to themselves, and, alas! have proved their weakness great indeed! why should we so easily forget it and think ourselves strong? we think often that we can manage things better than they. This is our weakness, and if God was to let us try we should feel it. Righteous Lot, though miraculously preserved from the wrath of God, poured upon the city of Sodom and Gomorrah, awfully fell afterwards. Abraham, to whom God promised, that out of him should arise a great nation, when he was tempted and in a strange land, denied his wife. Sarah, also being past child-bearing, could not believe God, but laughed at his promise, which was, that though she was old, she should have a son. David, a man after God's own heart, being in the way of temptation, awfully fell. And, indeed, the principle of free-will is the spawn of hell, and has led many of God's people into awful labyrinths, and has been the means of ruining those who are not his people. Peter was a zealous man of God, yet being left a little to himself, Satan having desired to sift him, denied his Lord and Saviour, thus shewing there is enmity between the person of Christ and the person of Satan, the church of Christ and professors. Do not therefore trust yourselves on forbidden ground, for though the people of God cannot sin themselves into black despair, they may awfully

fall. Oh! may the Lord keep them paupers, dependant upon his arm, for cursed is he else, as he hath said, "cursed is the man that trusteth in man, or maketh flesh his arm."

The aggravation of Peter's fall was heightened on account of the many privileges wherewith he was favoured. He was with the Son of God on the Mount of transfiguration. But see how the matchless grace of God reigned in bringing him back; see his bleeding Saviour at Gethsemane. The Lord as it were opened the flood gates of hell, and let hell into his soul, and he bore all the weight of Peter's awful crime, and thus manifested to Peter, that grace, free, rich, and sovereign grace reigned. May the Lord ever be with us and keep us in his fear.

ON CHRISTIAN LIBERTY.

John, viii. 36. "If the Son therefore make you free, ye shall be free indeed." Much we talk of freedom in our day, much is our mind perplexed about it, but how little is said, and how little we think of the freedom mentioned in our text. Freedom in this life, concerning temporal matters, will benefit us little, compared with the freedom which the Son of God gives to his children. The former endureth only a little while, but the latter endureth for ever. Oh! may this freedom be made manifest unto us through God's dear Son. We understand in consideration of this subject, first, Freedom signifies a prior bondage. Secondly, What is this freedom? Thirdly, God's Son makes us free. Fourthly, Ye shall be free indeed.

First. All men by nature are in bondage, hence, whosoever sinneth is the servant of sin. We groan under this bondage every day, unless when in the enjoyment of this freedom; and such a deplorable state of slavery was never known, nor ever will be known; we should never have known of vice, famine, and distress, but for sin. Youth would not have been in danger of falling into the temptations which continually await him, but for sin. The child would not have cause to weep over a dying parent, but for sin; or a mother anxiously watching over the pains and struggles of her suffering babe, but for sin. Sin's baneful curse has spread its awful contagion over all the world; and so alluring is its nature to ours, and so fond are we of it, we would not let it go were it not for the mercy of God in sending his invincible power into our souls. We are under bondage to the devil, he is the first transgressor, the father of lies, indeed of all wickedness, God is not, nor can he be the author of sin; but when made free, then do we find that the devils are subject to us. Though, rejoice not in this, but rather that your names are written in heaven. By nature we are in bondage to

the world, its charms, its pleasures ; its wickedness and deceit carry us like a flood from the ways of God and truth. We are in bondage to the law ; the law, when given to Adam, was in perfect accordance with his nature ; it was holy, just, and good—and so was Adam. But Adam having the management of it himself, broke its commands ; but the law remained the same, God determined it should not be sullied—it must be fulfilled in every point. And here are we, the sons of Adam, bound to produce a perfect obedience to a perfect law. The child of God is made to feel all this, and groan under it.

Secondly. What is this freedom ? Sometimes God is pleased to grant a manifestation of pardon at once, but oftener gradually. The first token of which, is to cry out for mercy. We never cry for mercy, feelingly so, until we enjoy a little of this freedom ; we pant for the water of life, and rejoice in a precious Redeemer.

Thirdly. The Son makes us free, and not ourselves. Suppose we were in debt and had nought to pay, and a kind friend was to become our surety and pay it for us, we should justly be free. And so it is with Christ, he became our surety, paid our enormous debt, and set us free. He is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth ; and thus is the law magnified more than if Adam could have fully obeyed its commands, inasmuch as it has the obedience of God and man ; and by faith we receive it and are made free. God grant us enjoyment of this freedom.

Hebrew, xiii. 1, “ Wherefore seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight and the sin that doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us.”

First, Who are these witnesses ? They are those who have witnessed to God's truth, as Abraham, Isaac, and others, as mentioned in the preceding chapter ; also apostles, ministers, and people who thus have borne testimony to the truth as it is in Jesus.

Secondly, What did they witness too ? Salvation being all of grace, through faith, not of works, lest proud men should boast.

Thirdly, Why called a cloud ? First, Because when gathered together they are a number which no man can number. What a crowd or cloud will appear in glory when all those who are gone, those who are going, and those are yet to go, will all appear in one glorious body before the throne of God, praising redeeming grace.

Secondly, Because as a cloud is a recipient of water, and drops down rain, so are the witnesses of God recipients of the water of

life, Christ Jesus, and at times they drop down showers of blessings upon the earthen vessels around them, filling them (instrumentally) with heavenly treasure. What is this race? In order to run in this race, you must have no legs of your own to stand upon, that is, you must be stripped of all dependance upon yourself, and stand alone upon the finished work of Christ, then you will run well.

What is it to lay aside every weight? To divest your mind of worldly care, sinful company, sinful propensities, which are heavy weights to the mind. The blood of the Lamb when applied to your conscience by the Holy Spirit will effect this and nothing else can.

What is the besetting sin? Not only any propensity of the heart, such as to drunkenness, lewdness, and other works of the flesh, but legality and unbelief combined.

What is it to run with patience? Those who go smoothly on have no work for patience to do, but those who run in this race have need of patience, that after they have done the will of God they may inherit the promise. Tribulation worketh patience; in patience therefore possess ye your souls; the Lord help you so to do.

January 9, 1842.

W. G.

JOY COMETH IN THE MORNING.

DEAR MESSRS. EDITORS,—Having favoured me by inserting my first letter, (I never before wrote with a view of publication,) I again write, as I find the Lord intends the *Gospel Ambassador* shall still go out among the sons of men, and as he has blessed the work, I trust he will yet more abundantly bless the labours of your hands. I wrote my other letter on the Monday, the Lord I trust giving me matter wherewith to write, and hope he will the same now, if it is his heavenly and divine will; but from that time till the next Lord's day, he was pleased to let me travel through dark paths. I was shut up and could not come forth, and prayer seemed a burthen; my mouth seemed as it were shut up, and I wishing I had done any thing rather than had the letter published, and had almost resolved writing to tell you not to insert it, as I had neither part nor lot in the matter. But, bless his precious name, he is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. I did not know any thing about praying to the Lord with groanings that cannot be uttered, before that time, Satan telling me I was presumptuous, and such a hard-hearted wretch as I was, it was impossible for me to be one of the Lord's dear family; but one thing I know, whereas I was once blind, now I see, was all I could say. But the Lord was

pleased to shine in upon my soul on the morning of his day, dispelled all the clouds of darkness, and I could say, my Lord, and my God, and with the poet,—

“Through floods, and flames, if Jesus lead,
I'll follow where he goes;
Hinder me not, shall be my cry,
Though earth and hell oppose.”

He was pleased to shew me that I was one of those that sigh and cry for all the abominations that were in my heart, and if my heart was hard before, he was pleased to break it, and I could say in the language of Isaiah, “He had sent his servant to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound,” *Isaiah, lxi. i.* And again, *lxvi. 2*, “To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.” Oh! these were precious words to me, as I could testify I was one of the happy number, and though my body was bathed in tears, my heart rejoiced, and I could tell the devil to his face he was a liar, as he had always been, nor could he stop the tears from flowing, nor all his infernal crew; then I could say with the Psalmist, “His anger endureth but a moment; in his favour, is life. Weeping or darkness may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning,” *Psalms, xxx. 5*. But though I have had at times sweet communion and fellowship with God, and the Holy Spirit bearing witness with my spirit that I am born of God; I am full of unbelief and sin, I want to have more love for God and his dear Son, who suffered that ignominious death on the cross for me. Then again the devil says, how do you know he has died for you? prove your election? But I can say as Monah's wife said, “If the Lord intended to destroy me, he would not have shewn me these things.” And it is a blessed privilege to know that we are sons of God by adoption and grace; and if sons, then heirs—heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ, if so be that we suffer with him that we may be also glorified together, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. But some may say, “How do you love Christ?” With the same kind of love that he has to me. But you may say, “Prove that.” I think I can; and we have known and believed the love that God hath to us; God is love, and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him. And, again, we love him, because he first loved us, *1 John, iv. 16—19*. But our love towards him is not so great, I suppose, as it seems natural for his people to wish to love him more, as I find I cannot love him enough, if I could, I should not be without his presence, for perfect love casteth out fear;

and we should not be tempted as we are, or give way to doubts and fears so much as we do ; but this we know, his word is sure, not one jot or tittle of it shall fail, and will stand firm throughout the countless ages of eternity. None of God's elect shall ever perish, and no one shall pluck them out of our Lord and Saviour's hand, though Satan goes about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. He never has devoured one of the flock yet, though he is allowed to harass and terrify us ; it makes us cry louder for help to him that has said, " Call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will hear you." Our dear brother, who is in the waters of affliction, says in your last number the Lord has shut his prayers out ; but I think he is wrong. Daniel prayed three weeks before his prayer was answered. Cornelius's prayers were gone up for a memorial before God ; and Jesus Christ says, " And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry unto him day and night ?" And then answers in the affirmative, " Through much tribulation you must enter the kingdom," and not a little ; and if our Lord and Master suffered such things, shall not his servants suffer the same things ?

" His way was much rougher, and darker than mine ;
Did Christ my Lord suffer, and shall I repine."

Though we know dark providences are not agreeable to us, but to fit us and prepare us for himself, they are beneficial. I hope, by divine assistance, the work will be carried on ; that both sower and reaper may rejoice together ; and may the Lord make it a blessing to many souls ; and I still remain, yours, in the electing love of God.

Two Waters, January 11.

A BRUISED REED.

THE PROMISE OF GOD.

" My God shall supply all your needs out of his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

MESSRS. EDITORS,—This precious promise has excited my thoughts and comforted my mind for several days, and I cannot divert my mind from it, nor do I wish,—but still I want to know if the promise is for me. Paul says, " Having food and raiment learn to be content." Now, I know well that the first thing I need is the mercy of the Lord ; another thing is righteousness, for I have none of my own,—and if I supposed I had, it would be no use whatever. Then another thing I need is redemption, another is forgiveness of sin ; and then, if I may so express myself, the crowning of all is salvation. These blessings are all secured to the people of God by the blood of Christ. There is not any one thing we need spiritually but what we have from this source. But it is said that this promise refers to temporal

supplies. Well, I believe our providential mercies are all included, and my heart rejoices at the thought ; and this is one reason why I think the Lord includes me or speaks to me in the precious promise. The Lord knoweth ye have need of these things (temporal supplies), and he will take care his children shall have them just at the right time. My path at present is surrounded and enveloped in thick darkness, so mysterious are his ways ; but the Lord knoweth when and how to deliver me. I must wait his time, but my old man rises up in rebellion oftentimes,—the enemy visits me ; bless the dear name of the Lord, the Devil is not permitted to dwell with me, for he well knows I hate him with all my heart, and I know he hates me,—unless he can get me into sin, and stir up the abominations within. Why then it pleases him. But the Master comes, and he is off directly. How precious at these times is the name of Jesus to my soul. “Unto them that believe he is precious.” And then I cry, O Lord ! look upon me in the face of thine anointed. Why so ? Because God the Father sees his dear Son as his co-equal, and the Father remembers his sufferings. The holy law is fulfilled in all its demands, and the perfections of God in his attributes are all unharmonised. Thus God is well pleased with his dear Son ; and being well pleased with all he did, for what he did and suffered, is all placed to the account of his elect. “The election hath obtained it (eternal life), the rest were blinded.” God sees no more sin in the church than he does in his dear Son. Mark the language, “Thou art all fair, my love ; there is no spot in thee.” *Sol. Songs, iv. 7.* Thus we have in Christ all we need for time and eternity. All is yours, and ye are Christ’s, and Christ is God’s ;—neither shall any power on earth or in hell ever be able to separate us from him. Paul says, “Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect ? Who shall separate us from the love of Christ ?” *Romans, viii. 35.*

Thus we have a life in Christ the enemy cannot touch. We have a righteousness the enemy cannot invalidate—“Our life is hid with Christ in God.” Oh ! how miserable and poor is every thing on earth, compared with these eternal realities. Let me have the fear of God in my heart, put there by God the Holy Ghost, then I have what no man can take from me. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. The Lord makes all his children wise spiritually ; if I possess this fear, why, then, I have nothing else to fear ; yea, it will enable me to say with the poet,

“Welcome, death, I’ll gladly go with thee.”

The real Christian never dies, death to him is only the stripping room, where he puts off his robes of mortality, preparatory

to his being arrayed in the robes of Christ's righteousness. Death to him is only the anti-chamber where he waits to be introduced to the presence-chamber of the King of kings, and Lord of lords. And, thus, he realises that great scripture, "Absent from the body, present with the Lord."

"In ev'ry state secure,
Kept as Jehovah's eye ;
'Tis well, with them, while life endure,
And well, when call'd to die."

Thus the Lord gathers in his lilies one after another as seemeth good in his sight. "And they shall be mine in that day when I make up my jewels." Now we very well know that jewels are valuable, and also scarce, and by the Holy Ghost's employing this figure we learn that the Lord holds his people in high estimation. Yes, they are dear to him, for their redemption cost him his precious blood. Thus they are redeemed by price and by power, he having "led captivity captive, spoiled principalities and powers, making a show of them openly." The Devil cannot hold a child of God a moment longer than the Lord permits. The enemy held my soul in bondage many years ; but when the Lord said "Loose him and let him go," the fetters fell off in an instant, and the Lord has never again permitted him to have such a hold of me since, and I trust he never will. "My sheep hear my voice, and they follow me ; a stranger (free will ministers) they will not follow, for they know not the voice of strangers." When the shepherd of Israel speaks, the poor sheep know his voice immediately, and they are glad to follow him, for "he leadeth them to the still waters" of his everlasting love ; he "maketh them to lie down in the green pasture" of his blessed truth, and commands them to "eat, oh friends ! yea drink abundantly, O beloved." "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art near me ; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."

Thus the Lord's children have only to walk through the valley of the shadow of death ; the dear Redeemer has extracted the sting of death, his people will only see the shadow, and even there his presence will be with them. They shall not fear any evil, the rod of his power shall protect them, and his staff shall support and comfort them. I once heard a minister say, that when he came to die, he would not trust himself to any one angel, or even all the angels in glory. Why not ? say you, Because nothing will satisfy him at that eventful hour but the presence of his most glorious Christ—Christ, in the hope of

glory. These are glorious mercies ; may the Lord make them precious to all his family on earth, and then we shall be able to sing with Toplady,—

“ Yes, I to the end shall endure,
As sure as the earnest is given ;
More happy, but not more secure,
The glorifi'd spirits in heaven.”

I, for one, can speak well of his precious name. My desire to him is that he will keep me near to himself—there abound his love in my heart—make eternal things preponderate with me—keep me in his blessed truth—make it dear to my soul—establish my goings—put a new song in my mouth, for the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Sion with singing, and everlasting joy shall be unto them, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. Since I have known the truth, I can say my feelings and desires have been, and are still to have, an increase and a growing in grace, and in the knowledge of God, and a desire to seek these things as his treasures ; and I trust the Lord will grant me an increasing desire to know more and more of divine things, and that the Holy and blessed Spirit will enlighten my understanding, then I may be enabled to feast upon these rich dainties—these royal dainties. Bless his precious name, the soul has a thorough dislike for the husks of universal redemption, duty faith, duty religion, and universal charity gentlemen (men-made professors). What a wonderful difference exists between one of this stamp, and a living minister of God—as different as light from darkness—as a dead body and living body. I believe when the Lord calls a man to preach to dead sinners, he sends a message with him, and attends that message with power ; and this is one grand distinction. The classical gentlemen are nearly all alike, they seem to have all their ideas in a box, and many of them are obliged to borrow from others, and then they are found out. Why London abounds with such ministers, both in the church of England and out ; and, thus, thousands upon thousands grow in delusion, until they fall into hell ; and I fear they are not better off throughout the country ; a minister of truth is rarely met with, but when he is found, then you see a jewel indeed. May the Lord increase the number of his stars among the churches ; then shall they shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father, and as the stars for ever and ever. Time admonishes me to close ; may the blessing of the Lord be with you, and prosper your *Ambassador*, is the wish of your most unworthy servant,

Newington Causeway, January 6, 1847

I. P. G.

DID JOHN THE BAPTIST DOUBT?

MESSRS. EDITORS,—Will you favour me with your thoughts, through the medium of the *Gospel Ambassador*, if John when he sent two of his Disciples to *Jesus* to ask him, saying, Art thou he that was to come, or should come, or look we for another? *Luke*, vii. 19. The query is here, did John send for his own information, or was it for the information of the Disciples he sent?

Your attention will much oblige, and may the Lord bless your labours, to the inhabitants of Zion. I am glad you are somewhat got over your difficulty in the work, and as you are again set forth in the same, my prayer is, that the Lord may favour you with the life-giving power of his holy Spirit. That the *Ambassador*, as a messenger, may bring glad tidings to the meek, strength to the weak, and wisdom to the ignorant; and remain yours truly, in bonds of truth and love, as standing together in one covenant head, Christ Jesus.

D. H. K.

ANSWER TO THE ABOVE.

How far the Disciples of John were exercised with doubts and fears, and were made to stagger as to the Messiahship of Jesus of Nazareth; and how far their being sent by John to the Saviour, together with what they heard and saw;—how far this circumstance tended to establish them in the truth and grace of God, we are not prepared to say; but,

We do not hesitate to give it as our opinion, that John was tried by the weakness and infidelity of the flesh, and that he was not without his fear that there was something wrong somewhere; nor, looking at circumstances, do we much wonder at this perplexity of mind to which John the Baptist was at this time subject.

Our reasons for believing that John the Baptist himself “*doubted*,” may be stated thus—

Firstly,—That John being in prison left to a certain extent to the will of his enemies, while at the same time he whom he had baptized, and upon whom he had seen the holy Spirit descend in bodily shape like a dove; he whom he had pointed out as the Lamb of God taking away the sin of the world, and of whom he had so amply borne witness.

John seeing this wonderful person raising the dead, casting out demons, feeding miraculously thousands, showing his power over all departments of creation and all worlds, holding at the same time John the Baptist in the highest estimation, and bearing testimony that there had not risen a greater prophet than John the Baptist; yet leaves John to lose his liberty and

in danger of his life, while in the very neighbourhood of the prison (Gallilee), the Saviour working miracles, but still leaves John in prison. And if John were left to

“ Judge the Lord by feeble sense,”

is it any wonder he should doubt? And would it not be rather a wonder if he had not, under such circumstances, been staggered at such mysterious dealings of the Lord with him?

The Lord's people are a *sensitive* people; and easily alarmed, and thrown into suspicions. They are not buoyed up with self-sufficiency, nor daring presumption, but tremble at the word of God, and rest only in the testimony of God. Job said unto the Lord, “ Why holdest thou me as thine enemy?” And we think that the Lord's *apparent* neglect of John, made John, even John the Baptist, doubt. And is John the Baptist *alone* in this matter? We trow not.

Secondly,—The answer given by the Lord, *directed to John*. We attach considerable weight to the fact that the answer was *directed to John*.

The answer consists of *two parts*.

Firstly,—The evidences of the Saviour's Messiahship, “ Go your way and tell John what *things* ye have *seen* and heard, &c.” This part of the message being attended by the power of God, and received in the exercise of faith, would set John at rest as to the *divinity* of this Jesus of Nazareth.

Secondly,—The evidence of acceptance. “ Blessed is he whosoever shall not be *offended* in me. This part of the message, attended, as no doubt it was, with persuasive power, would *reconcile* John to the present dealings of the Lord with him. And he would be led to believe that there was a “ needs be” for the tribulation he was called to pass through, and this tribulation by one of his former hearers; for Herod had heard him gladly, and did *many* things, but he did not do *all* things essential to prove he was a Christian. Therefore, when he came forward to John the Baptist, to join the Church, John gave him to understand, that he could not, though he was a King, be received unless he gave up his brother Philip's wife; and as Herod, when put to the test, proved to have more love to fleshly things than to spiritual things, he of course was not received into the church, but went from bad to worse, until he became the murderer of the very man whom he had a few months before professed to admire as a minister of God. Such is the *deceitfulness* of sin. And who in his senses, would not prefer the place and the prison of John to the *Palace* and portion of Herod? John had tribulation, but Herod condemnation. Truly it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God, while the real Christian is to count it all joy when he falls into divers temptations (*tribulations*).

All working for good, and all coming right at the end, so that all shall be pleased, none offended, all blest, not one good thing shall fail. Eds.

A FRAGMENT.

MY DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD,—Your letter came safe to hand, and I feel grateful to the dear name of him who gave himself for our sins, and hath delivered us from this present evil world, and translated us out of darkness into his marvellous light. When I think of the way in which the Lord has raised me up, when I look at what and where I was when in a state of nature, and contrast the state I was then in with the state I am now in, I am overwhelmed with wonder and astonishment, and am led to exclaim, “O Lord, what am I, that thou hast brought me hitherto?” His mercy is too great for language to attempt a description of. When I think of the many instances I have known, since I have been in the ministry, of the Lord’s mercy in calling one and another out of a state of nature to a knowledge of the truth (some of whom are gone to be with Jesus, and see him as he is), while scores, yea hundreds, have been favored with an increasing knowledge of, establishment in, and enjoyment of the salvation of God, I do not wonder at your meeting opposition in going to hear the real truth, and that from some that you hope are children of God; but they know not what they do,—at least, if they do, it is certainly hard to account for their conduct; but what will not even a believer do, if left to himself, as Mr. Hart well observes,—

“From sinner and from saint,
We meet with many a blow.”

Yours in Jesus,

W. J.

EDITORS’ REVIEW.

A Sermon on the Knowledge of Christ, and of Interest in Him the Support of a Believer in Life and Death; a Funeral Discourse, Preached in the Year 1765, by the late John Gill, D.D. To which is appended, a Meditation on Death, and a Baptismal Hymn.

This is a Sermon very well worth reading; re-published by Mr. Joseph Flory, of Norwich, with a desire to do good. This sermon is neither dry nor wordy; but there is, nevertheless, a want of clearness of parts. It sets out under *four* propositions, but the third and fourth become lost in the second, so that when we arrive at the end, we have not a clear view of the way we have come. We are invited to range over *four* distinct parts belonging to the heavenly inheritance, but we lose our way, and

no clear knowledge of the good land we are invited to search, is obtained.

But though the sermon has these faults in its *form* and order, or rather want of order, yet it is not altogether a body without a soul, which so many sermons are ; that while they are all that can be desired in *form* and symmetry, and even beautiful to look upon, yet alas there is no breath in them ; they are but cold companions, miserable comforters, and physicians of no value.

It is when order, proportion, life, power, and "thoughts that speak and words that burn" meet together, very pleasing. Is not my word like fire, saith the Lord, and like the hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces. But we must not expect more than men's gifts enable them to minister ; and this sermon by the venerable Dr. Gill is, notwithstanding its faults, well worth perusing. The piece at the end called "Meditation on Death," is so weighty, that we feel disposed not to withhold it from our readers.

A MEDITATION ON DEATH.

"O death, how dismal thy appearance, and how terrifying thy features to those whose thoughts cannot overlook this present transitory scene of things, who have not learned to expatiate in the unknown regions of eternity, and know not where they shall fix their everlasting abode ! How dost thou rend the man in twain, bursting the silver cord which knits the soul and body into one ! From what dost thou snatch us away ? To what regions dost thou convey us ? Through what dark paths wilt thou conduct us from this world to the next ? These all conspire to heighten thy terrors, and make thy gloom dreadful ! Thou riflest the treasures of the anxious miser, and sulliest all the honours of the proud. At thy command the drunkard finishes his debauch, and the delicious epicure becomes the sweet repast of worms and reptiles. How wilt thou quench each burning lust in thy cold icy arms, O king of terrors ! the man of letters forgets his favourite books. The sceptred hand now drops the reigns of government. The stately rooms of the palace no more behold their honoured Lord. Thou changest our countenance, and sendest us away. And whither, O whither wilt thou carry us when we renounce our correspondence with the sun, when our dull body drops into the grave, and moulders away unseen ? Where wilt thou send our trembling souls ? What sights shall we see ? What sounds shall we hear ? With whom shall we converse ? It is a state of which we know comparatively but little ; a world of spirits and of disembodied beings, with whom we have very imperfect acquaintance here. How dark is the transition, how dreary is the path that leads us through thy deep shady vale. O death, who knows

thy secret chambers, and which of our departed friends has returned to tell us what thou art? Yet must we tread the unknown road, nor when once entered on it, are our steps to be recalled. No man hath power over his spirit to retain the spirit, neither hath he power in the day of death. How universal is thy dominion! how insatiable is thy appetite, which never says, 'It is enough.' Long hast thou spread desolation through the world, not amongst beasts and plants alone, but also amongst man's imperial race, in every period of time; void of compassion on the smiling infant, the blooming youth, the venerable sage; thou blindest them in undistinguished ruin; thou regardest not the riches of the opulent; no bribe can be given; thou heapest contempt on princes, because they are born to die. Who is he that liveth and shall not see death? The trophies of thy power are universal; we need not the plains of battle to testify, for it is appointed unto man once to die. Alas, how short and transient! But as an April day, or as the shuttle that sweeps over the loom in a moment, or the darting rays of the fount of light to this our earth,

What is life? 'tis but a vapour,
 Soon it vanishes away;
 Life is like a dying taper;
 O my soul, why wish to stay?

"Yet boast not of thy victories over the Church of God. There are those who can behold thee with a smile, and rejoice by grace at the shaking of thy spear. Jesus the Saviour received into his soul thy fatal sting, and exhausted all thy deadly venom; in vain didst thou think to hold him under thy gloomy dominion, for though he was dead, yet is he alive again, and liveth evermore.

"He entered thy dreary gates, and tasted of thy bitter cup for every elect sinner. Why should we fear to taste thee, or to tread thy dreary vale, when the restorer is gone up before us! Glory to his omnipotence who brings the blind by a way which they know not, in his grace and providence, in paths of fellowship with Immanuel; thou art their convoy to immortal felicity, to chaunt an anthem to Jesus, the immortal King of eternity. But methinks I hear the poor humble, broken-hearted, devil-persecuted soul say, alas, I fear the work and consolation are sycophantic. But, oh dear soul and reader, flesh and blood and Satan's powers are appositely connived. Jesus doth hereby prove thee a living subject, making manifest thy election by the call; thy warfare brings home thy credentials to immortal realities, herein testifying that Jesus is not a root out of a dry ground, but to you Alpha and Omega, the chief among ten thousands, yea, the altogether lovely. Yes, wisdom, righteous-

ness, sanctification, redemption, yea heaven; for thou blessed Jesus, art the full fountain of joy. Though thy pains, O death, were as terrible as a timorous imagination is prone to paint them which yet they cannot be, still immortality and the staff of everlasting love thy terrors cannot affright, an abundant entrance being administered, peace imparting by the blessed promise, "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord, for they rest from their labours, and their works do follow them;" blessed works by imputation thine. Ye are complete in him; so without spot. Happy bride! to thy celestial husband faultless thou art presented; thou shalt stand with magnificence at the last day; hear the happy plaudit, for soul and body, when in the twinkling of an eye, corruption shall become incorruption; mortality, immortality; and hear, "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you before the foundation of the world;" (blessed fore-ordaining grace, no contingency) thou conveyest from sin, yes, for the divine life, or principle, of a believer is pure, for their sin cannot enter the new Jerusalem, or that which defileth or maketh a lie. Thou canst not carry us, O death, from the presence of that God whose loving-kindness is better than life, when with thy trident thou shalt break the pitcher of this mortal frame; the deathless soul is not like water spilt upon the ground; for the pitcher being broken at the fountain, its contents flow back to their great original. Happy morn! O death, thou bringest to participation for ever with the Lord; yes, it is blessed translation to Jesus the covenant head, to the innumerable company of ransomed intelligences, to the angelic tribes of preserved orders; therefore, rejoice not, O mine enemy; when I fall, I arise, O death, to the haven of glorious rest."

A FRAGMENT FOR THE "AMBASSADOR."

"For consider him who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds."

Ye who were chosen in the covenant head,
 For whom the Saviour once on Calvary bled;
 Ye who from death, are quicken'd now to feel,
 The plague of sin, and need of balm to heel;
 Who long for blest conformity to him,
 Who gave himself, his people to redeem;
 But feel within a constant war and strife,
 Flesh grieving spirit, death opposing life;
 Who would do good, yet, cannot what ye will,
 By grace made willing, but are helpless still;
 Despised of men, and tempted by the foe,

And sin oppress the source of every woe ;
Who walk in darkness or through weakness halt,
And fear in combat when the foes assault ;
Who swift are hast'ning from Egyptian sway,
And meet an ocean roaring in the way.
Whose angry billows farther flight oppose,
While lofty mountains every side enclose :
To such despised, tempted, and distrest,
This admonition, sacred, is address.

Consider him who every bliss procur'd,
What contradiction he from foes endur'd !
Against himself, he suffered scorn and shame,
And when reviled, answer'd not again.
Consider JESUS, God's beloved Son,
Who with his Father and Spirit ONE—
Co-equal, co-eternal, first and last,
Embracing present, future, and the past ;
All-mighty, all-sufficient, who agreed,
In ancient council for his church to bleed ;
Then made the world, by his commanding word,
And nature worship'd her creating Lord—
Behold him stooping ! from the heights above,
Instructing sinners in the ways of love,
By promise teaching, what himself would do,
In type revealing grace and justice too ;
Makes known his choice, and says the woman's seed,
With wounded heel, shall bruise the serpent's head.
Behold him, mindful, when the world is drown'd,
Of those, who favour in his eyes had found ;
When fires from heaven, falling on the plain,
Consumed the cities with their burning rain :
And Pharoah's host, pursuing Israel's race,
Destruction threaten'd to the sons of grace.

An ark saves Noah, when the earth's destroy'd,
For Lot's salvation, angels are employ'd ;
Seas part their waters, and admiring view,
The hosts of Israel passing safely through :
A rock yields rivers, and the starry skies
Rain manna down, and nature's want supplies.
As brightest orbs, retiring from the sight
Unseen, confess the sun supreme in light,
So every glory is excelled by one,
The soul's redemption by Jehovah's Son,
For which, descending from his lofty throne,
Our nature took in union with his own,

Became incarnate, and his God-head veil'd,
 And over all his brethren's foes prevailed.
 But e'en for them, salvation was procured.
 What shame and grief the church's head endured !
 No sooner born, than Herod sought to slay
 The Lamb, to bear his people's sins away ;
 Then Satan tempts, but Satan tempts in vain,
 His God-head nature, human, did sustain.
 The second Adam, in the trying hour,
 O'ercame the tempter in the Spirit's power.
 This conflict ended and his mission shewn,
 His foes, in wrath, conspire to cast him down ;
 Fiercely they thrust him to their lofty hill,
 By malice urg'd, the Lord of life to kill.

But, vain the task, to 'numerate the woes,
 Which Jesus suffer'd from his angry foes ;
 In brief, through life, till he his breath resigned,
 Against him, men and Satan were combined.
 The world despis'd him, and all hell enraged,
 Pour'd forth its armies, and the Lord engaged ;
 His brethren grieve him, and disciples weak
 To counsel wisdom, thoughtless folly speak.
 Forget, deny him, and at last forsake,
 While sinners smite him, and derision make.
 On Calvary's cross, his hands and feet they nail,
 And guilty men, the dying Saviour rail.
 Then last and worst, his Father leaves him too !
 And he, alone, sustain'd the sinners due ;
 His arm, almighty, then for them employed,
 Endured the curse, and every foe destroyed,
 And triumph'd there, o'er sin, and hell, and death,
 Exclaim'd, 'tis finished ! and resigned his breath.

The tomb received him, but could not retain,
 He burst its chambers and ascends to reign,
 In glory lives, and intercedes above,
 And pleads the ransom of eternal love ;
 All this reveals, and gives in foretaste true
 That we, through grace in him, may conquer too,
 By him to triumph and the crown obtain,
 And soon in glory with himself to reign.
 Then, this consider, when to fear inclin'd,
 Lest ye grow weary and should faint in mind,
 And may Jehovah speak the word with power
 To strengthen pilgrims in the dying hour.

December 11th, 1846.

J. S. F.

THE
GOSPEL AMBASSADOR;
OR,
Christian Pilgrim's Friend.

"Blessed are the poor in Spirit, for their's is the kingdom of Heaven," *Mat. v. 3.*

"The Election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded," *Rom. xi. 7.*

No. 3.

MARCH 1, 1847. .

Price 2d.

THE SAVIOUR'S SUBMISSIVE REQUEST.

Messrs. Editors,—The following remarks upon a most solemn matter express the leading views advanced with much reverence and savor by a minister I hear when I can. You must not suppose that the remarks as I have written them, are a fair representation of the spirit and power with which the subject was delivered from the pulpit. Yet as I found the subject so profitable to my own soul, I cannot think that even in the mere meagre way in which I have written them, that the Lord will suffer them to prove altogether null and void of use.

The Saviour's submissive request and ministration of the Angel, saying, "*Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me; nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done; and there appeared an Angel unto him from heaven strengthening him.*" *Luke xxii. 42, 43.*

There were four sources from which the Saviour suffered.

FIRST,—*From men.* Men knew him not; that is, they knew him not *truly*, or they could not have treated him even with irreverence; but they were not only destitute of any *true* knowledge of him, but were filled with unreasonable, unjust, wilful, and deadly enmity against him, and did all in their power to put him to shame and to death; yet they could not move him from the end for which he was born, nor from the wonders he came to reveal; he knew what was in men, and did not commit himself unto them. He endured the cross, despised the shame, and feared not man, but God.

SECONDLY,—He suffered not only from men, but also from the *hidden powers of darkness.*

Many speak of the great enemy of our souls, as though he were easily resisted and overcome; and indeed so he is, when the Lord treads him down under our feet, when he thus gives us

the victory. We resist the enemy, and he flies from us ; but as he cares not for the sons of Sceva, so neither does he care even for Joshua, the high priest, until the Lord Jehovah appear and cast him out.

Angels excel in strength ; yet even Michael, the Archangel, would not in his own strength, attempt to even bring a railing accusation against him, much less undertake to conquer him ; but said, "The *Lord* rebuke thee."

It appears that the Lord employed angels to bury Moses ; and *Satan* he also came to the funeral, and perhaps professed a great deal of regard for Moses, and wished to place his body where it would be respected (worshipped) ; but Michael, the Archangel, could not consent to this, as his commission was to bury Moses, where no man should know of his sepulchre unto this day.

The Saviour resisted and sent the enemy from him, in the day of temptation ; but now in the approach of death, it is the enemy's special time and power of darkness, and his wrath was great ; for he had but a short time, and now this Leviathan *after* he had bruised the Saviour's heel, was himself to be punished. This piercing serpent's head was to be bruised. This dragon was now as to his power, to be slain, (*Isaiah*, 27.) and how anxious was the serpent to bruise the Saviour's heel, in order that he should *not be able* to bruise the serpent's head. Yet, so it was, that *after* they had inflicted all the wounds they could upon his manhood ; he did with this manhood, with this bruised heel, bruise the serpent's head. And if the enemy had any hope of *disabling* in any way the Saviour from gaining the victory,—if he had such hope, how grievously must he have been disappointed, when he found that all he had done tended to his own confusion, shame, and defeat. Well may it be written, "Trust ye in the Lord for ever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength."

But still none but the Lord can conquer, and cast out this mighty foe ; yea, who can open the doors at his face ; his teeth are terrible round about, (*Job*. xli.) even great iron teeth, saith Daniel, (chapter vii.) and it (this Leviathan) devoured and break in pieces, and stamped the residue with its feet, and is strong exceedingly : he never relents for any of his cruelties, let those cruelties be what they may, for his heart is as *firm as a stone* ; yea, as hard as a piece of the nether millstone. He has carried thousands away by filling them with superstitious fears. When he raiseth up himself, in the Pope, in the Bishop, or in the false prophet, even the mighty are afraid ; and by reason of his breakings in upon them, they purify themselves with holy water, or infant sprinklings, or something (if possible) worse.

This Leviathan cares not for the greatest *human* powers. The sword of him that layeth at him cannot hold; the spear, the dart, nor the habergeon, nor can fetters forged by man, bind him; for he esteemeth *iron as straw*, and brass as *rotten wood*. Neither can human opposition turn him back from his purpose, for the arrow cannot make him flee; and sling stones, only one of which slew Goliath, are turned by this Leviathan into *stubble*.

Not only can he not by human power be turned back from his purpose, but he is not even *discouraged*; for darts are by him counted as *stubble*, and he *laugheth* at the shaking of a spear. Many impediments may be in his way, but he will put himself to the pain of overcoming them. Sharp stones are under him, and he spreadeth sharp pointed things upon the mire, by which he inflicts many a wound upon the children of God, when they get into the miry clay of this world, and by which sharp pointed things he *kills* the religion of many a profession, and so brings them down into his own bottomless pit.

He maketh the deep deceit of the human heart to boil like a pot, and the sea of corruption like a pot of ointment; yet it is in the ships of this sea, men prefer to sail, yea, they as it were lie down in the midst of this, and sleep on the top of the mast of these death-bound vessels.

The path which this Leviathan has come, is seen through all ages from the beginning of the world down to the present time. Yea, he has kept sin in such a foam, that one would think this deep to be hoary, but however pure it appears on the surface, it is after all but the *dead* sea still.

There is not the like of this Leviathan upon the earth, who is made without fear of any but God himself; he beholdeth all the *high things* of the Gospel, and longs to bring them down, but he never will be able to do so; although he still retains the "bad eminence" of being king over all the children of pride.

The 27th chapter of Isaiah, shews that this Leviathan refers figuratively to the enemy, and whether the crocodile or any other animal be alluded to *literally*, we cannot well doubt its mystical meaning; while that which Job had endured from this enemy, well qualified him to enter into the figurative meaning of Leviathan. Who then would undertake to say what the Saviour, in his last hours, endured from this monster of the deep?

THIRDLY,—The Saviour suffered not only from men and from the enemy, but also from *our sins*; he bore our sins in his own body on the tree.

He bore their burden that we may have rest; he shed his own blood that the destroying angel may not touch us; he was cut off that we may be consecrated to God; he came unto us

to bring us to God; he met all the evil tidings of our sins, that the good tidings of salvation may reach us; he engaged his heart to approach unto God, that we may have an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of grace and glory; he endured to the end that we may go from strength to strength, and in Zion appear before God; he fasted, that we may be for ever feasted, wounded that we might be made whole; he was bruised that we may be free from deformity; he underwent chastisement (or discipline) that we may learn the way of peace. We were worthy of stripes, he took this dishonour upon himself, that we may have nothing of which to be ashamed; and so we are healed of this evil also.

FOURTHLY,—He suffered also and above all from the sword of justice, from the curse of the law, from the deeps of vengeance due to sin, and so the curses written in the book were to be blotted out with the *bitter water*, *Num. v. 43*.

If then there was in what the Saviour had to endure that which was dreadful enough to make him express this submissive request, how true must it be that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

In this submissive request there seem implied the following things.

FIRST,—If it be possible to lay aside the sentence of thy holy law, then this cup can be removed from me; but this was not possible, for not one jot nor tittle of the law can fail.

SECOND,—If it be possible to pardon and justify thy children, without my dying for them, then this cup may be removed from me; but this is not possible, for by the works of the law shall no flesh living be justified, and without shedding of blood is no remission, and it is not the will of the Father that one of these little ones should perish.

THIRD,—If it be possible to lay prophesy aside, then this cup may be removed from me; but neither can this be, for the scriptures cannot be broken.

FOURTH,—If it be possible that the everlasting covenant can be confirmed without my blood, then may this cup be removed; but no, there *must* be the death of the testator; it is by the blood of the covenant that the prisoners go forth out of the pit wherein is no water.

FIFTH,—If thy name can be equally glorified without my enduring the cross; but no, for thou art holy, O thou, that inhabitest the praises of Israel: spiritual sacrifices can be offered only by him who is the end of the law, the end of sin and of death.

Thus the counsel of God must stand, and he will do all his pleasure; and if the will of God bound his holy law to take its

course in the substitutional suffering of his dear son, where shall the *ungodly* and the *sinner* appear.

How entirely *sinless* was the Saviour's submissive request, and

How willing was *Jésus* to die,
That we who are sinners might live ;
The life they could not take away,
How ready was *Jésus* to give.

Not my will, but *thine* be done.

And there appeared an angel from heaven strengthening him.

The first question here is, *how* is this to be reconciled to the *omnipotence* of Christ. If we say he was strengthened as man, we shall, without great care, be in danger of *dividing* his person and separating the two natures : still there is a good deal of truth in the idea that he was strengthened as man ; but this does not appear to me to solve the difficulty, because the question is that as he was God and man in *one* person, had he not infinite strength in himself, and could without the ministration of an angel employ his omnipotent arm in whatever way it was needed ? What *personal* need then could he have of being strengthened ? Did he not travel in the greatness of his strength ? and did not his own arm bring salvation unto him ? and over what department had he not shown his power ? Had he now when the angel appeared to him ceased to be what he was ? Verily, no. He was still in his *person* and *power* the same ; but he was not now in the same circumstances as heretofore, he was *now* come into that submission to suffering which the scriptures foretold, and it does appear to me that the *nature* of his mediatorial work and the *order* of the new covenant reconciles with his omnipotence the circumstance of the angel from heaven strengthening him. Yea, were not the weakness and sufferings and all he submitted to, was not all this according to the order of the *new covenant* ?

Hence, *Isaiah* v. may serve to make this matter the more clear where the Lord speaketh thus ; "What could have been done more in my vineyard that I have not done in it." Now this cannot mean that the Lord was literally *unable* to do more, for in the 27th chapter appears a vineyard in which he *has done more* than to this vineyard of the 5th chapter. Yet he could do nothing more to this vineyard—*not* because he had not power to do more, but because the *order* of the *old* covenant permits nothing more to be done. So here the Saviour could by a word have destroyed all his enemies ; but how then would the scriptures have been fulfilled, for the *order* of the *new* covenant required that he should give himself up to God and endure all the weakness and pains the Father is pleased to put upon him ; but in *Psalms* there is a sevenfold promise to Christ.

FIRST.—That he was to be *delivered in time of trouble*, and so it was that not any trouble could hold him finally.

SECOND.—That *the Lord would preserve him*; and so it was the enemy could exact no service from him; nor could the son of wickedness defile him.

THIRD.—That he should be *kept alive*; and so it was that they could not take him until his hour was come. The pains of death were also loosed, for it was not possible he should be holden of it.

FOURTH.—And he was to be *blessed on the earth*; and so it was that he prospered in all he took in hand.

FIFTH.—He was *not* to be delivered over unto the *will of his enemies*; and so it was that all their counsels against him were brought to nought and turned against themselves.

SIXTH.—He was to be *strengthened* on the bed of *languishing*; and so it was. There appeared an angel unto him from heaven strengthening him to shew the Father's continued approbation of him, and that he would not let him endure *our* weakness beyond what was right.

SEVENTH.—All his bed was to be made in sickness; and so it was that he died *in peace*, having finished the work the Father gave him to do; and the poor and needy whom he thus considered, and for whom he thus suffered and died, these poor and needy find him an hiding place from the wind, a covert from the tempest as rivers of water in a dry place, and as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.

A HEARER.

THE NOTHINGNESS OF *THIS* LIFE.

On hearing the lines of that beautiful hymn repeated by a young friend dying—

I shall soon be dying;
Time quickly flies away.

Verily death has lost its sting, to make the christian count the very hours for her departure from Egypt, and long to land on the promised Canaan. A sight of that land is enough to allure us from earth that is blasted by sin, therefore is the seat of woe; sin has given every thing a fearful aspect. Earthly things may look fascinating to the eye; but when we know the end of them is death, it behoves us to look out for something more durable, for time is landing us on eternity's wide brink.

Like Lot's wife, man looks back on its fleeting baubles, and still has a desire for them, even when near the border of the hill of life, when every step is taking him nearer to its destination.

"I shall be dying soon;" yes, we must all die, as water is spilt upon the ground. Man is mortal, and this wall of dust must tumble soon. "It is appointed unto man once to die, and

after death the judgment." All this world's treasure could not bribe death from taking his victim; nor does the christian wish it. She is ready waiting at her Lord's command. When the summons come that she is to quit earth, then overpowered with joy, she claps her wings, and says, "*Vain world, Adieu;*" but when the summons come to the unbeliever, 'tis terrible, as the poet says—

Death, 'tis a melancholy day
To those who have no God,
When the poor soul is forced away
To seek its last abode.—*Watts.*

Tossed about with despair, she flies to some pinnacle of her own self-righteousness, but in a moment she is washed away from off those dangerous rocks, and sinks to rise no more.

"I shall be dying soon;" yes, blest one, thou wilt soon be disencumbered of thy mortal clay, and drop the cord that binds thee here; thou wilt soon be done with sin and sorrow, and be with him whom thy soul lovest best, to live with him in the mansions of bliss. "I shall soon be dying; time quickly flies away."

Yes, I must soon be dying. Ah! blissful thought;
No more on this troublous ocean tost,
No more through the portholes of faith to look,
But in full possession of light I shall view
My Redeemer, my Brother, my Saviour, my Friend,
My all and in all, yea, world without end.

Yes, I must die soon; time is quickly passing away; like a poor shipwrecked mariner, I shall hail the sight of land. Oh, may my feet be strongly placed on that Rock of Ages; may my hopes be firmly placed on that sure foundation stone; but, oh my cursed doubts and fears, that fain would persuade me that I am a castaway, that I shall never enter that kingdom which my soul truly pants after. But will he leave what he has begun unfinished? No; he has promised to complete what he has begun, and bring forth his work with rejoicing at last.

Fiery trials, deprivations, losses of any thing, but the loss of my never dying soul; I'll rejoice in affliction, if it is to bring me nearer to him,—and glory in suffering, if it's to wean me from this world.

Oh, blest Redeemer, redeem my soul from destruction, wash it in thy blood, that it may appear whiter than snow; put on thy poor returning prodigal the pledge of thy everlasting love, mark me as a sheep of thy pasture, seal me as an heir of glory, and to thy name be all the praise.

Paddington.

E. O.

A RECONCILIATION TO GOD.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD,—If the following thoughts

are worth a place in your valuable periodical, you will oblige a few of its friends by inserting them at your opportunity.

"Agree with thine adversary quickly, whilst thou art in the way with him, lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, &c., &c." *Matt. v. 25.*

In meditating over this blessed chapter, my mind was arrested with the above words; and as I had not heard any one say anything on them, I determined in my own mind to put my thoughts on paper; so as I considered them, my ideas on them corresponded with my own experience.

But before I enter upon them, I would just observe that the word of God is the mind of God, and as this was spoken by the blessed Lord Jesus Christ, it must be meant for the instruction of his family; not that I think words spoken by our blessed Jesus whilst here below of more importance than all the word of God, for in my estimation it is a transcript of the Divine mind, and his love is so great towards his family that he will take care that they shall not err in matters of such moment as the salvation of their souls. This is clearly manifested from what he said to his disciples, "In my father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you;" don't be so very unhappy about my departure, for I will come again and receive you unto myself.

Is not this the case with the family now, when Jesus has paid us a visit, and withdraws his sensible presence from us? We are ready to say, it is all over; but is it really so?

But to the words "agree with thine adversary." First, who are the characters spoken to? not to the wicked, that is evident from the commencement of the chapter, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven." This don't belong to the unregenerate. To God's family only the words above are spoken; indeed, men in a state of nature consider they have no adversary. God is so merciful that it will be all right with us at last.

It is only the guilty broken-hearted sinner that these words are applicable. Then who is meant by thine adversary? The Devil is called the great adversary of souls. All men in a state of nature do agree with him. He saith to one go, and he goeth; and to another, come, and he cometh. They are led captive by him at his will, and there is no opposition from either party; he leads them forth to do his drudgery. At once, then, I think the words spoken are to the poor condemned sinner who feels himself in an awful state under an arrest. Justice has laid hold of his conscience; "pay me what thou owest" reiterates in the ear of his mind. Now he begins and breaks off all outward immoralities, tries to live holy, and thereby reconcile God.

He knows and feels there is a God of inflexible justice, and having some conception that he is also merciful, he is trying to purchase mercy by his good prayers and good thoughts ; but he finds repeatedly that the more he strives against sin, the more he finds that when he would do good evil is present with him ; and still remaining under the arrest of justice, he is tossed to and fro, and staggers like a drunken man, and is at his wits' end, and is really in earnest. Justice is pursuing, the avenger of blood is out ; he cries out in the bitterness of soul, " what shall I do ? " and supposing a free-willer falls in with him, sets him to work : you must pray more earnest, you must strive to enter in at the straight gate. He thinks this man must know how to get relief, and he sets to work again, and resolves not to speak anything wrong, not to act wrong, his eyes look forward, he is determined not to turn to the right or the left ; he reads the word of God, and thinks he has found out the secret, as he finds much there to encourage his diligence ; but the sword of the spirit, the word of God, which meets him in the face of his activity, such as this, " Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the law to do them ; " this cuts at the root of all his diligence, his expectations are cut off, he lays very low, and he must now be honest to himself, thinks that God is his enemy. The justice of God now appears as his adversary ; the apprehension of being cast into the prison of hell ; his soul is distressed, and sorrow of heart is the consequence. He resolves to double his diligence ; he rises up early, sits up late, eats the bread of carefulness, still the adversary is out against him. " What shall I do ? " often escapes his lips. " Agree with thine adversary " quickly comes in again, demands full payment ; a little disposed to say, " Have patience with me and I'll pay thee all ; " but he finds the harder he works the less money. The Devil now comes in with his crafty insinuations, " You had better give it up. Now, it is too late. You have arrived just where thousands get, and can get no further. Religion enough to make you miserable. The longer you go on the greater will be your fall. " Whilst the adversary is prompt to his demands, " Pay me what thou owest ? " At last he finds himself quite insolvent, stripped bare, and in a lost condition ; prostrates himself before the Lord, with " Lord, save, or I perish. I find myself ruined ; sin has ruined me, soul and body, for ever. " And when they had nothing to pay, he freely forgave them both ; the Lord is pleased, even in the fullness of grace, and even boundless mercy, to reveal himself to the poor cast down soul. Now he comes at once, as a poor condemned criminal, and perfectly agrees to the justice of God. But how to get deliverance is the point with him. He is now

in earnest at a throne of grace ; he smites upon his breast, and cries, " God be merciful to me, a sinner ;" he sees so much defilement in his own doings. " Unclean, unclean," is his cry, for in the very act of worship before God, his mind is carried away after some foolish and vain thing ; he gets up from his knees, ashamed of himself, and he often wonders he has been spared so long ; he proves the long forbearance of God towards him, that it is of the Lord's merey that he is not consumed. When the law of God is read over in his conscience, and in the spirituality of it felt, a hearty amen is produced at every sentence, and agrees with the Apostle when he says, " Wherefore the law is holy, just and good, but I find another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity. I am carnal, sold under sin. He agrees to the holiness of it ; he agrees that it has a right to a man's conscience ; that every faculty of the soul should be pure, holy, and without sin ; he agrees that it is right of God to demand from his intelligent creatures perfect obedience ; he agrees that his affections should be like a constant running stream of love, gratitude, and praise ; he agrees that it would be perfectly just in God to condemn him ; and bringing on him all that is pronounced against sin and sinners.

The God of all grace is at the bottom of all this ; he is bringing one of his chosen ones into a state of communion and fellowship with himself ; and though the justice of God was his adversary, there is a perfect harmony formed between justice and a self-condemned sinner ; and when the curses of God are pronounced against sin, he is necessitated to pronounce his amen to it.

But there is another way in which these two parties agree ; the Lord, the spirit, is pleased to give this man living faith in a precious Jesus ; but this faith is to be tried, when, fresh guilt is contracted ; that his sins appear as a mountain ; darkness over-spreads the mind ; guilt is felt in the conscience, and nothing can relieve this burdened soul but the great captain of our salvation, who arises with healing in his wings ; the curses of the law are revealed ; but faith is called into exercise and the standard is lifted up to the eye of faith ; the smoke of Sinia appears, the curse is pronounced, the soul that sinneth shall die ; agreed, says the soul, but the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin ; indeed the sinner is enabled to sit down by the side of justice ; and sees this glorious perfection of Jehovah shine in the atonement of Christ, and thus the poor sinner is enabled to sing, my Jesus has done all things well ; he now can sing of mercy and of judgment.

There is a time coming when there will be a perfect agree-

ment between the saved sinner, and the justice of God ; the Apostle says, know ye not, that we shall judge angels, ah, and the wicked too ; this is appalling to our natural feelings that we hardly like to touch upon it, but it is true ; judge, angels, fallen, artful, and crafty devils, who have employed all the energy and malice against God, and his church. The wrath of God is now upon them for their disobedience in the first instance of rebellion ; but his fury will be poured out upon them, for their spoiling the creation of God, for the continually warring the peace of his family, for leading into sin ; for tempting to evil, for his awful insinuations into their minds, for laying his baits and snares to catch the wary traveller, for his whispering all sorts of things into the ears of the saints, separating chief friends, breeding discord in the church of the living God, sure the saints of God will be called to witness against them.

Judge, wicked men, this as I said before, is appalling to our natural feelings to think of ; but did I know a wicked depraved sinner, living and dying in the practice of sin, but then standing before God ready to hear his final and awful sentence ; should it be a brother, a sister, wife, husband, or child, depart ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels ; and is it possible the saints shall agree with the justice of God in their final condemnation. I think, according to the nature of things, it must be so ; may I be helped to think of these things, and enabled to live upon the fulness of Jesus, prove the efficacy of his atoning blood, and when called to leave this state of things, to have Him as my Rock and Refuge, and my everlasting all. Amen.

Essex, February 4th, 1847.

J. C.

THE WAY OF REST.

“ Return unto thy rest, O my soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee,” *Psal. cxvi.*

A real sensibility of our departure from God, is a good step towards our restoration, and sets us to work earnestly in examining our souls, and the cause of its relapsing. How prone we are to look at things seen, and to rest in things temporal. By doing this we lose sight of our blessed resting place. And the enemy of souls is always laying wait in ambush, watching every opportunity to spoil our resting place. Hence, in *Prov. xxiv.*, 15, “ Lay not wait, O wicked man, against the dwelling of the righteous ; spoil not his resting place.” It is one of the greatest eye-sores to Satan to see poor sinners rest in Christ by a living faith. This makes him rage, and go about like a roar-

ing lion, seeking whom he may devour. But Satan is bounded by infinite power, and his path limited by divine counsel; therefore what he doth to the church is amongst the all-things that shall work together for her good and his final destruction.

Now the above text hath reference to that poor sinner that hath felt Christ to be his resting place. And such an one knows that there is no solid rest but in Him.

Every returning to Christ is attended with self-abhorrence, self-abasement, and godly sorrow, for departing from Him. And while we are taking shame and confusion of face to ourselves, and feeling ourselves utterly unworthy of His regard, O then for Him to visit our souls with everlasting kindness, saying, "I will heal thy backsliding, and love thee freely," O this is more than a match for our souls; at this we are completely overcome; this brings us to feel of Jesus our eternal rest; the whole bent of soul, then, is to rest in Him. Ah, but alas! we depart again; yea, again and again. What is the cause? It is our birth-sin. This sin the believer is led more to mourn over than all his actual sins; because it is the root, the fountain, from whence all other sins flow. Now, none but the Holy Ghost can lead a man to trace his sin and relapsing from God to his birth-sin. After experiencing the nature of our birth-sin, we are led to commit ourselves into the arms of Divine strength, saying, "Hold me up in the goings of Thy path, that my footsteps slip not." And though we at times do slip, yet hope in His mercy still keeps us going. Oh the Divine felicity and Spiritual sweetness there is in truth when spoken to our heart by the Holy Spirit, yea how sweet is the eternal unction that comes with it; and with what a still small voice is it spoken, "Hearken unto me, O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel which are borne by me from the belly, which are carried from the womb. And even to your old age I am He; and even to hoar hairs will I carry you; I have made and I will bear; even I will carry and deliver you. *Isa. xlii., 3, 4.*

Believer, hast thou wandered from the path that leads to thy Heavenly rest? If so, thy soul hath not found solid rest any where else. As the dove that went from the ark could find no rest for the sole of her foot, and returned again to Noah, so it is with the believer,—his soul was never born for this world. The foot of faith cannot rest her sole but in Him that gave her birth. It is worthy of observation that the word "rest" in our text is derived from the same root as Noah is, and Noah signifies rest: Lo as the dove returned to Noah (its rest), so the believer returns to his Almighty Noah (his rest).

Believer, is thy soul cast down,—are thy spirits heavy,—doth

thy conscience lash thee for having departed from thy rest? Are you thinking in your own mind, because you have gone aside, and forsaken him, that He will return no more with mercy? Oh yes, he will return again. Thy sinning have caused him to hide his face, but remember he changeth not His heart. Hear what he saith, "In a little wrath I hide my face from thee for a moment, but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer." Oh, but say you, I am so weighed down, my sins press me heavily, and I am ready to cut myself off. But he saith, "Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and ye shall find rest for your souls." Ah, but, say you, I feel myself so far off. But however far you may be off, you are not out of his sight, nor yet out of the reach of his promise. "Peace, peace, to him that is afar off, and to him that is near, saith the Lord, and I will hold him." Come, then, poor sinners, return unto thy rest, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee. He hath not dealt with thee according to thy sins, but according to his everlasting covenant, "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." *Heb. viii., 12.*

I shall now humbly endeavour, firstly, to point out this rest; secondly, I shall humbly endeavour to lead the sinner to it.

(To be continued, if the Lord will.)

THE LORD'S LEADINGS.

If this should be worthy of your monthly communication, may God in his mercy have it and bless it to the poor tried, and afflicted, and burdened down with soul trouble, feeling not fit to live nor yet to die, that are finding it such a narrow world which leads to life eternal, who feel death and destruction stamped upon them, all dark and gloomy, and feel that the Lord seems to turn a deaf ear, and seem to hear the Lord pronounce, "Depart, ye cursed, I never knew you." This my soul is a witness of; but the Lord will give sweet and precious tokens to such tried and perplexed. These sighs are not in vain, for I am a witness that where the bitters are the sweets are in store, and God will reveal them again and again; for I do find that these are the cryings for the full manifestation of God's grace. I am often at my wit's ends to know what to do and what step to take; often have I wished the earth would open its mouth and swallow me up, times and times; but God has been very merciful to this day, he keeps me crying to him; he has not yet cut me off as a cumberer of the ground, but in his mercy shewed favour, and makes me feel at times that my life is hid with

Christ in God ; he also, I trust, gives me great encouragement to go through the deeps, to swim in soul trouble, and to go through the fire, for these are they which see the mighty works of God ; and sure I am that these, and only such, as find help from God, for I do find that it is only such that are stripped of creature righteousness ; it is, I find, only such that are driven by their insincerity from man or self to God. I have been cast down in such a manner, and the Lord knows it is a truth which I am now setting before you ; I often think the Lord has quite forsaken me ; I have had to cry, "Is thy mercy clean gone for ever ; wilt thou be favourable no more." I often feel afraid that I shall one day fall by the hand of Saul, and in my feelings there to get nearer hell than heaven, going entirely backwards, and say, "It is no use here ; I must perish at last, for here I am ; I must give up, the Lord's hand is against me ; I am a castaway, neither fit to live nor yet to die, and if I was cast to the dogs it would be too good for me." I find it a great mercy to have these frames and feelings,—yes, it abases the sinner and exalts the Lord. "Sorrow may endure for a while, but joy will come." I have been at times greatly relieved with the following words :— "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted." And sure I am I would sooner be a mourner in this manner, because I know it is far better than living with them that have no fear of God.

O I find there is nothing like being troubled and perplexed, however painful to flesh and blood it is and ever may be, my soul feels encouraged to choose that path which is painful to flesh and blood, sooner than to be like Moab on my lees, to be at ease in that calm state where Satan is the master, deluding the eyes to an awful extent. Sure I am that it is far better to be a poor despised worm here, either in my own eyes or in the eyes of others, to have God's favour and a heaven here, than to be lying and wallowing in the sin of this awful and deluded world in which we are now, the God of this world has so blinded all eyes, that were it not for God's mercy, all would be on that road which leads to everlasting damnation, instead of mercy. O friends, beware of that passage of God's word which cannot be broken, many are called but few are chosen ; and again, beware of them which come in sheep's clothing, but are like ravenous wolves, for there are many which seem right unto a man, but the end of it is eternal destruction.

May God give us eyes to see more singly ; for whosoever cannot forsake father or mother, brother or sister, wife or child, he cannot be my disciple. This is trying work, painful to flesh and blood ; but pleasing to God. My son, give me thine heart ; the Lord does not want a part, nor

yet nineteen parts out of twenty, no, but the whole. I think I shall never forget, more or less, one Sunday evening, about three miles from my friends, about two years ago, as I was going home, the Lord visited my heart just at that moment, to which my soul was ready, as it had been crying out for God's smiles, it leaped for joy; in a moment then could I forsake all. I was very willing to forsake father and mother, brothers and sisters. No kinder parents could there be, and I hope with the fear of God, as it was light then; but now I can say that I can forsake them. God has been pleased to set me apart from all of them; but then I could sell all, and give all to the poor. I was even willing to go through any thing, in any shape. I wanted no one to say John, you must do so and so; no, my whole dependence was in God, to direct that I might go right, and as I go on one day after another. I cannot walk in any path that man can set forth, which goes against conscience; conscience I have to listen to, and ever wish to do, however galling to our natural mind; and, O may God lead me and others in that path of self denial, to seek the righteousness of God, to have our loins girt about with truth, to have on the whole armour of faith, to walk separate, to suffer affliction with the children of God, sooner than to enjoy the pleasures of the world only for a season. O that the Lord may in mercy give us more singleness of eye to his glory, and make us ready continually to watch the manner of his leadings, guidings, and teachings; there may we be led and be enabled to commit all unto the care of God, as he is the first and the last, the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. All things are in his hands, for if he begins, it must be carried on, through whatever opposition it may meet; but when the thing is carried out, then we shall know on which side we stand. Seek God's favour, and no man's smiles, which bringeth a sorrow. May the Lord in mercy keep us in every slippery path, that we may stand when strong temptations blow. O that we may have our feet shod with the Gospel; so that if we are set aside by the world, may we run, and not be weary; walk, and not faint. May the love of Christ abide with all his poor despised, which passeth all knowledge.—Yours in the bonds of love, and affection for the truth.

D. J.

DECISION.

Messrs. EDITORS.—There are some people who talk much of the assurance of faith, and in a manner too which staggers some of us weaklings; if they don't exactly say you might believe if you would, it often implies that; now I think a good

deal of theirs is judgment faith ; but what use is that in the day of trial ; it will all go to the winds ; one puff of the devil will blow it away you may depend on it. Jesus is the author and finisher of our faith ; now this just suits me ; for I do find myself so utterly helpless, I am sure I can't finish it. I know by painful experience, when I am in prison and my feet fast in the stocks, I can't release myself, but sometimes I have an agonizing cry for relief ; prayer of necessity and all other prayer is mere formality. I find my going to the word don't really help me ; it is when the word comes to me with divine power, then it brings me out of the prison and lifts me up on high, and I feel my defence to be the munitions of rocks ; and I find the bread given and waters sure ; for I eat and drink thereof and praise the name of the Lord with a joyful heart, and then I know its not false joy, I'll tell you why, because it endears truth, endears Jesus. Christ is precious, and so much so, that its unspeakable, and full of glory ; now this is what the Holy Ghost says in his word of true joy, and that's the *standard* of experience I want. I have felt so completely stripped and my religion all gone as it were, except a cleaving and adhering to the truth. I think there is but a few even of the children of God who have the great I knocked out of them, for they talk as if they could do a great deal, and act faith and do this and do that, but alas, alas, I find without him (Christ) I can do nothing. We have an account in the 8th Chapter of Judges of Gideon, taking two kings Zebah and Zalmunna and discomfited all the host, and he said unto Jether his first born, "up and slay them," but the youth drew not his sword, for he feared because he was yet a youth ; the kings said unto Gideon, rise thou and fall upon us, for as the man is, so is his strength ; and Gideon arose and slew them. Now what is the use of this to the children of God if it has not a spiritual meaning ; bless the Lord, I believe he sweetly opened the meaning of this to my soul ; and this is it when we are weak in faith (a youth), we cannot draw the sword of the spirit, the word of God, and slay our enemies and feel our feet on their necks (whatever men may exhort us to), for the children of God want to act in these matters from good authority ; no, when youths, we fear and tremble at these kings ; but when made strong in the Lord and in the power of his might, we can do valiantly ; we can then wield the two edged sword, the word of God, and shout the sword of the Lord and of Gideon, victory through the blood of the Lamb ; yes, rejoice in the spoil, and go out in the dances of them that make merry ; and the dance is to the Jerusalem music, and not to the great I free-will Babylonish music.

Thy words were found and I did eat them, and thy word was

unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart. Some people find the word themselves and act faith upon it ; but I cannot get on so well as I could wish in finding it myself, but when the spirit of all truth brings it home to my soul with power, then I get on most gloriously, quite to my heart's content ; and, bless the Lord, I trust he has again and again opened up portions of his word to my soul, and have hoped therein, and still desire to hope.

C. C.

Brighton.

FROM ELD. JAMES OSBOURN TO BR. G. AMBROSE.

DEARLY BELOVED,—Grace be with thee. Your affectionate epistle, dated the 5th inst, came safe to hand ; and also the one directed to me in Glasgow, Kentucky, I got safe, when I was there in Nov. last ; and for them both I here present to you my sincere thanks. In a Christian correspondence there is that which is refreshing to my spirits, and hence your letters to me, though too short, are short and sweet ; and my epistles to you are sweet also, it seems, and hence you say you prize my correspondence, and regret that my letters come so seldom ; and I may here say that this is the cry of a vast many people in these United States : and my printed works also are as much prized, and sought for with equal avidity, as my private letters. And I can but bless the Lord of all for making my public and private writings so abundantly useful to his dear church and people. While carnal preachers and writers, and mere empty professors, can growl and snarl at my writings, and quarrel and find fault with me, and long and wish for my halting, or downfall, or for my worshipping three Gods, as the Sabellian Baptists in your State say I do,—I say, while those things are found among graceless mortals under a show of religion, others, such I mean as the Lord's poor and needy ones, and who are acquainted with the inward teaching of the Holy Spirit, can feed on, and be thankful to the Lord for such writings and preaching as mine.

If God will own and bless my labours to his sheep and lambs, it is no manner of use for dogs to growl, and snarl, and fret, and foam, and tell fibs, and circulate foolish things in order to invalidate my preaching and writings. Perhaps you will be ready to say that I need not wonder, nor be any way surprised, to find men who are settled down in darkness, and ignorance, and errors, discommoded by the truth of God and experimental preaching and writings. That is true, my brother, nor do I wonder at it ; nor am I in the least surprised to find men to treat my writings with contempt, who profess to be as fond of Orthodoxy and Old-Schoolism as you and I are. Two men may agree

very well in the *letter of the truth*, and in the *form of the Gospel*, and in all the *out-works of Zion*, and be two men still, one being in possession of the Holy Ghost, and under his teaching, and influence, and guidance, and the other totally destitute of the same. In this lies the distinguishing line between those few who fear God, and worship him in the Spirit, and draw life and comfort from Christ, and divine refreshment from the word of promise, and those poor dry sticks who have a large stock of gospel notions in their heads, but no holy unction, heavenly dew, nor divine savour in their hearts. Thus, men may be Old-Schoolmen, as the cant of the day is, and as sound as a bell in the letter, and also have a heap of zeal to vindicate the truth, and may cut a fine figure in a religious and orthodox journal, and yet be an idle speculator in theology. And it would be much more surprising to me for such men not to speak against the power, force, and sweetness, of the precious gospel of the Son of God, than it is to find them guilty of so doing.

What Paul calls *the things of the Spirit*, always were, and they are yet, a mystery to all men who are destitute of that Spirit and of his secret workings in the soul of a vessel of mercy; nor will an outward profession of religion, or orthodoxy, or old-schoolism, remedy the difficulty. The mystery will still abide, so long as the soul remains destitute of the Spirit. The head may improve in a knowledge of the letter of the truth; but that is not coming to the point, since it is but theoretical, and shows itself mostly by noise, and mighty displays, and strong propensities to quarrel, dispute, find fault, and to play pretty games on the surface in order to draw forth the admiration of frothy religionists. Also the head may increase in light, but not spiritual, but a sort of moon light, it being void of heat; with it a man may see far into history, and into prophecy, and into predictions, and into the downfall of Babylon, and many other wonderful things; but not into the mystery of the Holy Spirit and his secret work in the soul.

Some of *the things of the Spirit*, are his quickening, enlightening, strengthening, comforting, encouraging and reviving influences. Another *thing* is, he testifies of Christ to the poor, needy, trembling, tempted, bewildered and sin-sick soul. And another *thing* is, he helps our infirmities, and makes intercession for, or in us, and brings to our view the glories of eternity and the wonders of immortal love. Another *thing* is, he opens a promise to us, and gives us the joys of it, and then creates the fruit of our lips, so that we may praise the Lord for his goodness and for his wonderful works to the children of men. And another *thing* is, he bears witness with our spirit that we are children, and heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; this

makes us glad and happy, and bold and strong. And another *thing* of the Spirit is, he scatters divine odours on our souls, by means of which we spring up as among grass and as willows by the water courses; and then we say, Praise ye the Lord! Amen! Praise ye the Lord!

Now these are some of the secrets, or mysteries, that are confined exclusively to the heirs of promise, and revealed to them by the Holy Spirit, while carnal preachers and graceless professors are all in the dark about them, except it be what they may have heard the Lord's hidden ones say of them. But just learning those things of men, or gathering them from books, differs very widely from having them engraved on the soul by that most blessed Spirit who works in us to will and to do of his own good pleasure. And my attachment to you, my brother, is so close and strong, and so much of the gospel kind, that I can but hope and wish that you may be deeply taught, and clearly enlightened and greatly strengthened, by Jehovah the Spirit.

And as you say in your letter to me, that preaching Jesus is your soul's delight, so I wish you great happiness and success in bringing to the church's view her divine Lover and most affectionate Husband. Show unto this mystical bride, that all wisdom, strength, riches and honours, are her Husband's native right; and that he also is full of grace and truth; and that all respects, adoration, and homage are his due, for he is God, and God alone; but dwells in a trinity of persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; three in One and One in three. And in this matter, and concerning this vastly important, and highly interesting subject, pay no sort of regard to what carnal professors say against the Holy Trinity, for you may be assured that men who are engulfed in the Sabellian heresy, are altogether out of the secret which is bound up among the Lord's disciples; and entirely in the dark about the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and his office-work in the soul, and of the part which he takes in the economy of man's salvation.

Again, then, I say unto thee, as unto a faithful and wise steward in the mysteries of God, "be instant in season and out of season," and preach Christ crucified to poor needy sinners, and tell them who he is, and what he is, and where he was from, and what he came here for, and whither he is now gone, and what he is doing there, and whom he is doing it for, and what will be the result of all his doings, and sayings, and promises.

Also tell them something about his heart, and how tender it is, and how it feels for, and sympathizes with, and yearns over, the poor and needy of his little flock. And also tell them, if you know how so to do, how full the Saviour's bosom is of love,

and mercy, and truth; also of boundless compassion being pourtrayed on his breast, and where also may be seen in lively colours, all the signals of grace and pity. Yea exhibit him to the people in Ohio as the true Messiah,—as the Faithful Witness,—as the Anointed of the Father,—as the Great Prophet,—as the good Shepherd,—as the Angel of the Covenant,—as the first Elect,—as the King in Zion,—as the true Tabernacle,—as the hidden Manna,—as the fatted Calf,—as the slain Lamb,—as the Door of the Sheep,—as the Gate of Life,—as the way to heaven,—as the Mercy-seat,—as the Ark of safety,—as the golden Altar,—as the perfect Sacrifice,—as the Day-star,—as the Sun of Righteousness,—as the Rock of Ages,—as the Foundation stone,—as the Wall of salvation,—as the End of the law,—as the Beginning of the gospel,—and as the only true God and Eternal Life.

(To be completed in our next.)

EDITORS' REVIEW.

A Pill and Black Draught for the Heart Sick Evangelical Clergymen, republished with an additional preface by Mr. John Corbitt, Baptist Minister, Biggleswade, Bedfordshire.

Mr. Corbitt is one of those few whom the Lord owns to the effectual good of the souls of men: he is earnest in his work, he lives to the Lord, and reads and prays, and preaches with *all his heart*, lays the axe at once to the root of the tree, the hammer to the rocky heart, and the fire of truth to the hay, wood, straw, and stubble of the Pharisee; and has certainly hitherto proved to be a workman, that needeth not to be ashamed; nor have we any doubt but the past is a sample, and only a small sample of the future, especially as we look for experience to bring more *patient* investigation of the scriptures, more precision of thought, and *steadier* and *surer* aim at his object. He has in him a fulness of life in his work, and needs only a little more shaping and forming to make him a *polished* shaft in the hand of the Lord; the iron will not then be quite so *blunt*. He will hew Agag in pieces more *neatly*, without any *mangling*, and he will not make *quite* so much *noise* in the pulpit, but will do quite as much (yea, more) *work*.

Favoured as he is with communion with God, and with eternal things, he is raised above the fear of man; and seeing delusions on every hand abound, he feels justified, yea, constrained to use every scriptural means to expose the same, and as far as the Lord enable, undeceive his fellow mortals; and seeing not a few led away blinded and deluded by the human inventions of the Church of England, and meeting with the

above tract of 41 pages bearing upon the same, he seized upon it, and republished it, with a hope of its being useful.

The author of this tract (first published in 1833) is Mr. Wm. Giles, of Liverpool. Mr. Giles has most clearly and unanswerably opened the woeful delusions of Church-of-Englandism, shewing that it begins, goes on, and ends with delusion. First, it takes the unconscious babe, and pronounces it regenerated, and made a member of the true Church, by a few drops of water sprinkled upon it; this is delusion the *first*: then comes the confirmation, in which this same man-made christian is recognised as a regenerated servant of God; this is delusion the *second*: then comes the sick bed; here the clergyman is on the ground of a little supposed repentance, to pronounce absolution of sins, and if need be, minister the sacrament, and so the poor creature dies, as blind to, and ignorant of the regenerating saving grace of God, as a Hottentot; this is delusion the *third*: we then come to the funeral, and here we are informed that the departed died in the *sure* and certain hope of the resurrection of *eternal life*; this is delusion the *fourth* and *last*: yes, millions of money annually expended thus to delude and destroy the souls of men; and thus does the Church of England, like her mother the Harlot of Rome, trade in the souls of men, *Rev. xviii*, 13, and God will ere long bring her to judgment; her doom is fixed, her days are numbered; while her history and present delusions show the awful account she will have to give.

The title of this tract by Mr. Giles we do not approve; it does not accord with the *seriousness* of the matter of which he treats. The deluding of never dying souls is a matter too tremendous to be playful upon, and the more we enter into these things, the more earnest we shall be. It is said of the Saviour that being in *agony*, he prayed the more *earnestly*, and it is for ministers to travail in birth for the souls of men.

'Tis not a cause of small import
The pastor's care demands;
But what may fill an angel's heart,
And fill a Saviour's hands.

Mr. Corbitt has, in his preface, used some few expressions which would have been better left out; but his motives for republishing this tract, and the sincerity with which what he has written is expressed, more than covers these blemishes, and will be caution for the future; for a wise man will hear and will increase learning, and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels, *Prov. i*. 5.

It is to us a matter of astonishment how any man taught of God can continue in the Church of England; but even the scriptures shew that some good men would be found in diffe-

rent parts of that GREAT CITY BABYLON, and hence they are exhorted to come out of her, to partake not of her sins lest they also receive of her *plagues*; and when the Lord hath delivered his people from the city spiritually called Sodom and Egypt, then shall be the judgment of that city.

We pronounce this tract, republished by Mr. Corbitt, well worth reading; but *where* in London it is to be obtained, Mr. Corbitt has not informed us. Eds.

WHAT IS LIFE?

What is life? a bubble blown,
 An airy vision—here, then gone;
 A flower that blossoms, soon decays;
 A thread, that snaps a thousand ways;
 A wreck upon the ocean cast
 As smoke before the wint'ry blast.
 Thus is the fleeting life of man,
 How soon his mortal race is run;
 A few short years of fleeting time
 Is all that is allotted him.

“If so being clothed, I shall not be found naked,” 2 Cor. v. 3.

Undressed, to be dressed up anew,
 In heaven's fair garments divine,
 More splendid I then shall appear
 Than all the gay mortals of time:
 When decked in that beauteous robe,
 That my Saviour wrought out on the tree,
 I shall praise him in mansions above,
 When the portals of time shall give way.

Paddington.

E. O.

A FRAGMENT FOR THE “GOSPEL AMBASSADOR.”

“The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence.”

Just as the body, when depriv'd of life
 Unconscious lays and in corruption rots,
 (Alike offensive to the sight and smell)
 So, every son of fallen Adam's race
 Is in the soul, from God estranged far,
 Corrupt and dead in trespasses and sin:
 All the created virtues once possess'd
 In Adam, ere he fell, are now destroy'd,

And guilty mortals enter in the world
To spread contagion by that sin procur'd.
Whatever men possess that is admir'd,
And useful to each other in the state
Which God in wisdom doth for each appoint
In things pertaining to this lower world,
Is all on them bestow'd as each may need,
And made subservient to that one great end,
Which is design'd for Jesu's blood-bought bride ;
And but for mercy and preventing grace
Which stems corruption's torrent in its course,
No one were safe, since men oppos'd to God
And Satan's willing slaves, with hatred fill'd,
Would each, his brother and himself destroy.
As saith the Word, " not one is righteous found,"
Nor understandeth, none seek after God,
Out of the way, each guilty soul is gone,
And all, unprofiting together are.
Not one that doeth good ; (tho' many boast
And hope to merit heaven by their works)
Each throat, an open sepulchre, emits
The stench of every sin corrupted heart ;
The mouth, with cursing, like an arm'y fill'd,
Supplies the tongue with spears and rankling darts,
Which with the lips envenom'd, secret wound
And pierce the soul like adder's poison'd fangs ;
The feet, to evil run, and haste to shed
The blood of those who hate the ways of sin ;
Destruction in their ways and misery wait ;
And peace's way to sinners is unknown,
Nor fear of God before their eyes is seen.
O what a suffering life did Jesus live,
While here below he dwelt with sinful men !
Holy himself and harmless, undefil'd,
From sinners separate, what grief supreme
Must pierce his righteous soul and pain increase,
While he omniscient saw the wreck within,
Which sin had made in every human breast,
And in his manhood, felt the vile reproach
Which men incessant on their Maker cast ;
But this was only of that bitter cup
One small ingredient which compos'd the whole.
Such is the awful state of every soul ;
Yet men in ign'rance live, till sov'reign grace
New life imparts and quickens from the dead,

And makes the sinner feel, that all, within,
 Are bruises, wounds and petrifying sores,
 Whilst outward acts as streams polluted, prove
 The source corrupt makes manifest, that he
 Is what the word describes, a "Leper foul,"
 And more than this, a debtor to the law,
 And under sentence of eternal death.
 When brought to this, and Sinai's scorching flame
 Burns up his filthy rags of righteousness,
 And leaves him naked, helpless and expos'd
 To apprehensions of eternal wrath,
 His false hopes fail, and from a sense of need,
 He from the dust of self abasement cries,
 "Be merciful to me a sinner, God."
 The holy Spirit, who the prayer inspir'd,
 Reveals a bleeding Saviour to the soul,
 And works the faith, by which, he then believes,
 That Christ aton'd for all his numerous sins;
 While the same grace that shews Immanuel's wounds
 Reveals the Father's everlasting love,
 The soul releases from its chains of guilt,
 And casts out fear and fills with peace and love.

O! precious, precious change, the oil of joy
 For mourning given, while from the horrid pit
 And miry clay, the soul brought up now walks
 In gospel liberty and feels, that Jesu's blood
 Heals all its wounds, discharges every debt,
 And cleanseth from all sin and brings it nigh
 To God the Father to rejoice in Christ;
 And death, once feared, now, it fears no more,
 But longs for death, to come and take it home
 To join in triumph with the church above.
 No others learn the song, nor God can praise
 Thro' Christ, tho' from the Scriptures they may learn,
 And see as many do, that they are lost;
 Yet if they feel not, nor for mercy seek
 In God's appointed way, they still are dead,
 And dying so, in silence will descend
 To dwell for ever with the lost in hell.

O! may each reader, if Jehovah's will,
 In earnest seek to know, if in the Book
 Of life eternal, God has plac'd his name,
 And realize that mercy, which thro' grace
 Each ransom'd soul enjoys thro' sov'reign love.

February 14th, 1847.

J. S. F.

THE
GOSPEL AMBASSADOR;
OR,
Christian Pilgrim's Friend.

"Blessed are the poor in Spirit, for their's is the kingdom of Heaven," *Mat. v. 3.*

"The Election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded," *Rom. xi. 7.*

No. 4.

APRIL 1, 1847.

Price 2d.

A TRUE WITNESS OF THE POWER, MERCY, AND
TRUTH OF GOD.

"Thou shalt remember all the way the Lord thy God has led thee."

The Lord was pleased to give me a tender conscience when I was very young, so that I could not sin cheaply; for when I was but a boy I often felt concerned for my soul and sorrow on account of my sin, and though as I grew up I mingled with other youths and partook of their sports, yet I was not permitted to run into the extremes of sin. So that even then the Lord *preserved* me from evil though I knew him not, and in his own time was pleased to spoil *me* for this world, its pleasures, and its toys, and led *me* to seek my all in HIM, and I cannot but adore the riches of his grace who remembered *me* in my low estate with that *mercy* and *favour* that he bears to his own; and the manifestation of his favor to *me* was as follows:—I was a teacher in a Sunday-school, and in *me* the scriptures were fulfilled, it was "the blind leading of the blind," for I knew not the meaning of the name of Jesus, neither was I acquainted with his wond'rous work; but while this was the case there was *a secret something* working in my mind, which said that "the way I was going on was not right, and if I continued to go on in the same way it would not be well with me," and this *secret something* continued to work till it brought about a reformation in my conduct, made me an attentive reader of my bible, and caused me *earnestly* to set about going to heaven; but, alas, it was in mine own strength and on the ground of works I expected to get there, and "being quite ignorant of God's righteousness I went about to establish a righteousness of my own," for in those days I knew not that "Christ is the end of

the law for righteousness to every one that believes." Thus I was permitted to attempt to build upon myself; but it was but an attempt, for I could never complete my foundation, much less raise my building, for I could not attain to that *perfection* in the flesh that I sought after, for though I admired the improved appearance of the "old man," the *secret something* was still within saying that "there were things going on that were not right," but I hoped in time to get *rid* of these things, and *then*, I thought I shall have hope; but the lust of the flesh would live and work within, destroy my hope and cause my foundation to give way. Thus the Lord in mercy destroyed my works that I might not be destroyed. About this time a professor said to me, "There is a young man, a Mr. Wells, preaching in Prince's Place. I would have you go to hear him." I went, and he was commenting on *Eccles. iii.* and there was a charm in his ministry that at once bound me to it. The hearing of him was the introduction to a new state of things, and indeed "old things passed away and all things became new," for a mysterious change took place in my feelings, and I felt an interest in the ministry of the word that I never felt before. When I, for the first time, heard that "human nature was depraved," I embraced and heartily believed it, for I had felt it; and when I heard that we "were helpless," I also believed it, for I had felt the same; but when the preacher went on to speak of Christ Jesus Jehovah's way of justifying the ungodly, he went at once beyond my depth, I could not follow him, for I had never before heard of such a precious Saviour, nor had any told me of this wondrous friend, and I gazed upon him with sorrow, for I felt I knew him not. Now the Lord was pleased to put his hand again to the work and "the fountains of the great deep (of self) were broken up," and the doors of "the chambers of imagery" were thrown open, "and I went in and saw, and behold every form of creeping things and abominable beasts," and with Paul I felt that "out of the heart proceedeth murder, thefts, adulteries, and all the things that defile the man," and though I strove against these things for a long time I found that still "out of the heart proceeded all the things that defile the man." I was led on in this way till I saw that sin was as natural to me as my breath, that it was interwoven with my nature, and that the law of depravity in my members was an immutable law and that there was in it a dreadful necessity leading me to sin, and that according to the constitution of things I could not be anything else but a sinner before the Lord; this was a sore trial to me, for I felt that things that my nature loved and impelled me to do, were sin against the Lord, and that in them was the transgression of the law of God. The Lord also was pleased to shew unto me

his sovereignty and his immutability. These, his perfections, were in my soul's estimation as firm as his throne, for I felt that the throne that He sat upon was a throne of sovereignty, and that in the exercise of it "He had mercy on whom he would, and whom he would he hardened." Being brought here my mouth was completely stopped, yea, "I put my mouth in the dust and went softly," and felt that I had no claim upon the Lord, and that if ever I received anything from the Lord he must bestow it upon me sovereignly. These feelings led me to tell the Lord that if he were pleased to slay me that I had nothing to say against the righteous display of His sovereignty; but Lord, I also said, I cannot be content to be cut off, for I cannot help clinging to thy mercy, and if thou cut me off, I shall mourn for ever and ever. Sometimes there would be a fearful working of the law of depravity in my members, and then distraction and despair would seize upon, and drink up my spirit, and then I would make up my mind to think no more of divine things; but the nail was fastened in a sure place, and these things clave to me so that I could not give them up. Yea sometimes desire would rise in my soul toward Jesus and his precious work, and there would seem to be in his offices a sweet adaptation to my case. At length the time of deliverance came, and it was on this wise I was hearing Mr. Wells. He described my case (my heart began to get large within me, and a softness stole over my spirit,) and after he had described my case, he went on to speak of the Lord's "Knowing all about us from everlasting, and in the face of this, His knowledge of us, He set His love upon us." I sensibly felt the burden roll from my mind, and there was the removal of the sins of that land in one day. I came out of the chapel as joyous as an uncaged bird, and I said, "It is all gone." Often after this the Lord was pleased to visit me by the means of the same instrument. I was on my watch tower looking out for his coming, when the doors of His house were open. I was found in His earthly courts, and I *loved* the place where he was pleased in my soul to *record* His name. His ordinances were like cups filled with sweet wine, and I could say of his word. I have esteemed the words of thy mouth, more than my necessary food, for it was "a light to my path, and as a lamp to my feet," and I can truly say of those happy days, that it was as though I only lived for the truth's sake. Business, friends, and the world were nothing to me. It was JESUS and JESUS only. Since this blessed period, bitter have been my trials, sore my temptations, and many my fears, for in the hour of temptation and *inclination* to sin I am often compelled to ask if the above experience was of the Lord. When this is the case, sometimes he has been

pleased to confirm me in the same, by repeating the vision in its power and its sweetness. The dear Lord having been pleased to make Mr. Wells such a blessing to my soul, I esteemed Him highly for his work's sake, indeed I thought too highly of him, for it was as though he had a patent for preaching, and that no one could or ought to preach but him, for if he went from home to preach, if it were for one or more Sundays, those were sure to be fasting days to me, and if the supply preached the truth clearly a strange feeling of jealousy would rise in my mind. Joshua was not more zealous for *His* Moses, when he said, "Master Moses forbid them," than I was for my beloved W. But the matter is not so now, I still esteem him *highly*, and there is not one of the Lord's ministers that lies so near my heart as he does, yet I rejoice in the promise of the Lord, "I will give unto her pastors after my own heart." But to return, the Lord having brought me thus far, and settled me in his dear truth, new designs began to rise up in my mind, and when I was favoured to pour out my soul to the Lord, I found that the Lord would make use of me in his church, was a desire that formed a prominent part of my petitions. I was exercised much about this matter for some time, till at length I was moved from London to work in the country, into "a land where there was a famine, not of bread, nor of water, ; but of the hearing of the words of the Lord." This was a *great* trial to me and my wife, for she knew and lived in the *power* of the truth, to leave the ministry of our beloved pastor, a table spread with the choicest gospel fare, and to go into a *wilderness* that produced nothing but briars and thorns ; but the Lord would have it so. We had heard that the truth was preached within three miles of us. We went (and before we got there, my poor wife said if we cannot hear him, what shall *we* do?) to hear, but we could not *gather* anything, for the field was sown with divers seeds ; and we had hitherto been so well fed, that nothing but the choicest of the wheat, nothing but pure grain would do for *us*, so that the preacher's *chaff* found no place in us ; but we were not alone, there were a *few* who knew and loved the truth, and this few requested me to speak to them ; which I did twice a week for some months ; and during the time I was thus engaged, I was much indulged with light and warmth in my soul let into the truth, and often received answers to my petition, which the Lord led me to make to Him, and the *few* that attended said that "their souls were blessed, and that they thought the Lord intended to make a minister of me." After a while I began to think a little of myself, and thought I could preach as well as Mr. So and So, and began to desire to get away from the *few* to whom I believe the Lord made a blessing, and my thoughts were,

if I could but get up to London. The Lord was pleased to bring me to London, but not in the way that I wanted. In the country I had employment for my hands, for my mind, and for my tongue; while in town I had not employment for either for some time, and I wished myself in the country again, for the Lord was not pleased to open any door for me to speak in His great name, and I became dumb. My supposed greatness passed away as the early dew, and I dwindled in my own esteem till I became as a little child weak and helpless, yet I was a child, and indulged with the privileges of a child, and favoured to believe that in the whole the good hand of the Lord was manifest towards me, instructing me, and leading me about and teaching me that "No flesh should glory in His presence; but he that glorieth should glory in the Lord." Amen.

QUARTUS.

USEFUL EXERCISE.

DEAR BROTHER AND FRIEND,—Sword in hand I am forced to sit down and write to you, and were you not an old soldier I should think you wanted an interpreter, but you know the different sounds between drums and trumpets; you can tell the difference between "to arms! to arms!" and go to bed sound. The one rouses the mind and the other is a signal for rest. I was very much concerned before I received your letter. I was afraid there was some Assyrian deserter who had been telling you that I was a Jacobin, and therefore you had dropt corresponding with me; but your precious epistle set all to rights. I have been on hard duty since, so that I have not had an opportunity to write to you; indeed, the Assyrians have been in the sharp-shooting line from behind the bushes, and so there is but little satisfaction, which is often the case when we have had a little refreshing interview with Jesus our captain, and have heard him say, "I am thy salvation," and have had some encouragement from his promising never to leave nor forsake us, and he tells us though an host should encamp against us, we need not fear, and "when thou passest through the waters I will be with thee," for in the army list we read of many old veterans that have fought under his banners, and in his strength have run through troops and leaped over walls. Some have said, "Though I fall, yet shall I arise;" and when they have got lifted up by the right hand with such words as these, "Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee," you would rejoice to see them again advance as if they were anxious to have another opportunity to shew their attachment to their captain. And sometimes when

they experience some of this refreshing glory risen upon them, they boast over these Assyrians, and cry with a loud voice, "My mountain stands strong, I shall never be moved," and they care no more for their enemies than so many flies, but they brandish about their armour, and you may see what are the precious things which they boast of,—a covenant God, and covenant love. They are justified freely by his grace, they stand complete in him, their salvation is eternally secure, their captain has fought all their battles, and they are delighted in reading these Extraordinary Gazettes, "I have finished transgression, and made an end of sin; because I live ye shall live also; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as wool. It is your father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom, there to be for ever with the Lord, when sorrow and sighing will be for ever done away." While the soul can sensibly read these precious things the enemies flee away, but when we lose sight of them, and lack their influence, the Assyrians begin to chatter, "Where is your salvation now? Where is your boasted confidence? Where is the glory of Christ? Look into your own heart and see if there be anything like God? Is it reasonable to trust to the shedding of blood? Is it reasonable to believe in the person of Christ? Can you make it straight? God and man united in one person, satisfying the law, and you standing justified before God in his righteousness. You feel a load of guilt, how can you make that reasonable that God is pleased with his own sacrifice? It is not reasonable. Do not be such a fool." But bless the Lord we have such a salvation that all the suggestions of our enemies will never be able to overturn. Distress, confuse, and harass a soul they may and do, but one look at the Extraordinary Gazette by faith will make all straight again, and the bones (as you once observed) will be all well.

I did think of giving you a history about temporary travels, but to begin without giving a full account would only be to set you on edge, so I will let it be till we meet together. "Ah!" say you, "but when will that be?" No matter for that, man, I always believe it will be. But I have generally given you a hint of my old friend B——. I have to say of him as a soldier, he is often in the guard-house. G. G.

A LETTER WRITTEN MORE THAN THIRTY YEARS AGO BY JOHN WARBURTON.

Trowbridge, 14th May, 1815.

DEAR BROTHER,—You will think that I have forgot you, but can assure you it is a mistake, for I have not, and I hope never shall. I have no doubt but you have heard that we all got safe

to the bounds of our habitation which God for a time has fixed, but how long it is to be that is unknown to me; but for any thing that I can see it appears that the Lord has designed it for good, and I pray that it may be for his glory. Mr. Gadsby preached for us the week but one after I got here, upon the subject of ministers and people uniting together, from two texts, the one was "Preach the word," and the other, "See that ye refuse not him that speaketh," and a very solemn time it was indeed; he had precious liberty, and I believe the power of God was felt in reality. He has several seals to his ministry in these parts; and I must not forget to tell you how he (Mr. Gadsby) boasted of his church and people at Manchester when in the pulpit at Trowbridge. He told us he had the honestest, honourablest, and liberalist church in the world, and nothing should stop him from boasting of them through all the region of the west. He did set you forth in a very honourable light indeed, and I believe not more than you are deserving. As it respects myself, I have been very much in the dark, since I came here, in the pulpit, so that sometimes I have scarcely known whether I have been telling truth or lies, and have come home as full of rebellion as if I had been a devil let loose, and you need no information what I am in the pulpit without wind. It is miserable work for me to preach dry doctrine without unction. But what astonisheth me is that God will own such bungling preaching, for it has been and is a blessing to many. I can only settle it in one place. It has pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe; and if it has pleased God, why should I be displeased because my pride is pulled down? and nature never can love that, but God has fixed and settled it, and it shall never give way,—no flesh shall glory in his presence. Dear brother, were it not for God's unchangeable love, eternal purpose and decree, immutable covenant and unchangeable promises that are all yea and amen in Christ Jesus, I should have no hope, and what a mercy it is that all our rebellion and hard heartedness can never alter the covenant that is safe; and I am sure I never saw more need of firm things in my life than at present, for I have strange things to grapple within my heart, and have very much darkness indeed, but I verily believe that God has brought me here for usefulness to his children, but can assure you poor John has no room to boast of his wonderful gifts and great preaching, but very often makes out of the pulpit, and as soon as ever I can get out of the place run home just like a thief or a rogue, fretting and foaming and raging like a devil let loose. I am just a thinking this very moment of poor B—— in the guard-house. O how uncommon well I should like to see him, for I verily believe we should

agree to a hair's breadth, the hair and all ; but I must drop my pen, for I am such a fool I cannot write. The place is well attended as usual, but I expect will be thin enough bye and bye. My family is all well in health, with myself. I hope you will not reward me evil for evil in being so long in writing to you, but hope you will send me a letter very soon, by return of post if you will. My love to your wife, with all the friends whom I love in the Lord, and have now and then a spirit of prayer for you all.

Yours in love,
JNO. Warburton.

To Geo. Greenhough.

FROM ELDER JAMES OSBOURN, TO BROTHER
G. AMBROSE.

(Concluded from page 68, vol. vi.)

When Christ is thus brought to view before a congregation, by a speaker who knows by experience what he is talking about, and of whom he is speaking of, it is well calculated, under God, to encourage, and to strengthen, and to enlighten, and to comfort and cheer sorrowful souls, and to soften hard hearts, and to stir up drowsy minds, and to collect scattered thoughts, and to arrest the attention of careless sinners, and to honour the Lord of life and glory. And of such a speaker we may safely say, "*How beautiful upon the mountains are his feet!*" And the Lord grant that you and I may be taught by the Spirit how to preach the gospel of the grace of God, and also how to exhibit Christ to dying men. It is most evident from scripture, that the true sheep and lambs of Christ's fold, cannot be really benefited and refreshed, but with just such things as are prepared for them in the gospel ; and hence into these green pastures, and by those soul refreshing streams, we should endeavour to lead the Lord's chosen ones. And in order to do this, we need to be pretty well acquainted with those green pastures and streams ourselves. Not merely acquainted with them some years ago ; but acquainted with them now in the present tense ; since it is at those streams, and in those sweet pastures that our souls thrive, and grow, and become quite vigorous ; and then is preaching Christ crucified delightful employment.

So preaching Christ and the gospel in the power and demonstration of the Holy Ghost, is sure to bring on the preacher the scorn, contempt, derision, and displeasure of carnal men who know not the scriptures nor the power of God. And I am not altogether insensible of the many and great trials and bitter reproaches, you have to endure of men who are not like-minded with you in the gospel. But whatever may be the scorn and

scandal which you have to suffer for the sake of sound doctrine, and conscientiously defending the glorious honours of Deity, I hope you will be enabled to bear the same with Christian patience and fortitude, knowing that time is but short. You also know that it becomes men who dare to be singular for the sake of truth and a good conscience, to bear persecution quietly and to view it as a badge of their holy profession. To be turbulent under a gospel cross is not a comely sight,—but submission is.

It is a singular thing, and yet it is true, namely, out of a heap of reproaches, the Lord often forms a beautiful diadem for his reproached ones to appear at court in, and there to say, “We take pleasure in reproaches,” &c. 2 *Cor.* 12, 10. You know that our glorious Lord, at one time, turned water into wine, and that it was deemed a miracle: and what shall we now say, when right before our eyes, the same Lord God very frequently turns gall and vinegar into odours of a sweet smell. And at one time, the ancient Israelites found the waters to be bitter; even so bitter that they could not drink thereof; but a certain tree, by God’s order, was cast into them, and they became sweet. At another time also, a lion fierce and strong, roared against a man as he was on his way to Timnath; but on his way back he found a swarm of bees and honey, in the carcase of that very same fierce lion.

And just about so, my brother, are our afflictions, and reproaches and crosses, sweetened by Israel’s God, who is our tree of life, and whose fruit is most sweet to our taste; and by him persecution is often turned into honey, and we eat thereof and are satisfied. And I wish we may always observe those things, for then shall we understand the loving kindness of the Lord, *Psa.* *cvi.* 43. I also wish the Lord may bless your soul with a deep sense of his immortal love, and lead your mind into those great and precious truths, and divine mysteries of the cross, which so many people are *altogether* ignorant of and *altogether* in the dark about; and which some others again only know in the letter, or in the same way as they know any natural fact.

Suffer the word of exhortation:—Try to live near to God, to a covenant God, and to commune with him, for you will find it much to your soul’s interest to do so. It is an honour to get into the bosom of a Saviour, and there you may get, for it is open night and day for all who really wish, and want, and seek for a place there; and it is said that he gathers the lambs with his arms, and carries them in his bosom, *Isa.* *xl.* 11; seek a place here, my brother, seek a place here; for the enjoyment of it I more particularly mean; for if you are what I take you to be, your place of abode is in the bosom of a God, and there you have been from before time, and there you will abide when time

shall be no more and death itself is dead. But still I want Elder Ambrose to give all lawful diligence to live in the enjoyment of an abode so honourable and so safe.—And will you not take my advice in this thing?

Brother Eld. Williams of whom you speak, is a choice man in my estimation; and so likewise is Eld. Peters, whose name you mention. But as to your Sabellian heresiarchs, and those who dance after their pipe, I pity, but have no fellowship with them in the gospel; for in my view of divine teaching and of pure Christianity, those men cannot be men of grace who can and do, (as a writing which I have received since I saw you, amply proves,) laugh to scorn, and speak disdainfully of the holy Trinity, and sarcastically treat the glorious doctrine of three Persons in One God, as did old Sabellius before them. And if indeed, you yourself are in the Sabellian heresy, let me know it if you please, and I will drop all correspondence, and connection, and fellowship with you on the ground of real christianity. But I hope better things of you although I thus write; but I have said these things that you might distinctly know and understand, that in a religious point of view, I have no wish or desire to know any man after the flesh; and also that I estimate the truth and honour of God, far above the friendship, and high esteem, and good will, of all the religionists in the world.

Write soon—write often—write largely—write without reserve—write experimentally—write the truth—write in love—and write about Christ.

I am yours affectionately,

Baltimore, Jan. 1839.

JAMES OSBOURN.

THE GOODNESS OF THE LORD EFFECTUALLY SHEWN.

SIR,—As the Lord who is rich in mercy and abundant in goodness, has been pleased to bless your ministry to a poor sinner in bringing him out of error and delusion into the truth, as it is in Jesus, feels a desire by the help of the Lord to open his mind to you, and to tell a little of what the Lord has done for his soul by your ministry, and have no doubt but what you will give him all the praise. I shall not be able to say so much as I could if present, but as Walthamstow is some distance from you, and as I may call on a day and not find you at home, therefore I have made an attempt to write a few lines; I have had the subject of writing to you very much on my mind for some time, particularly all last week, and as I was privileged to hear you yesterday week, when at the close of the service in the evening, you gave notice that you should be in the vestry with the deacons on the Monday evening, to see any persons that had

a desire to join the church, and to know what the Lord was doing among you, and yesterday, sir, my desires were still more strengthened by the feast my soul enjoyed. I shall just mention my state, before I heard you preach, which was the second Sunday in last October. I had taken up notions of religion from the year 1844, but knew no more about the real truth than a beast, but I was considered a Christian by my so called religious acquaintance, and I had no doubt but what I was myself, and the preaching I heard still kept me in the same delusion. In the summer of last year I was led to see a little of my state by nature, and to feel I was a sinner, and that I had broken God's holy law. I could read these things in my Bible before, but had never felt the truth until now. I felt wretched and miserable, and I had such horrid and blasphemous thoughts against God, that I could have cursed Him. I was acquainted with a young man, a member of the chapel I attended; I was not a member, I was wanted to join, but I had never felt any inclination. I told this young man what a state I had been in all the week, and I did not think a work of grace was begun; he told me I was to banish such thoughts out of my mind, and simply believe and trust in the promises; my duty, he says, was to believe the same doctrine I heard from the pulpit. Well sir, I thought all this was to be done, and no poor creature ever tried to do these things more than myself, but could get no comfort from them, although I thought all these doctrines were true. I felt, of all men, the most miserable. Well, I thought to myself, if this is religion I will have no more to do with religion, and tried to put eternal things out of my mind, but I could no more do it than I could fly, although I was very careless at times, but the Lord who had His eye upon me for good, and "who moves in a mysterious way His wonders to perform," was opening a way for my deliverance. A friend came from town to see me on the first Sunday in October, I did not feel any inclination to talk upon religious subjects, although this person was favoured with a knowledge of the truth; he told me about your ministry, how he enjoyed it when he heard you; he said he should like me to hear you, but, sir, my mind was very much prejudiced against the high doctrine ministers. I understood they were Antinomians, not that I knew what they really preached, it was what I had been told by professors. I told my friend I would go the first opportunity with him to hear you, and now, sir, mark the hand of the Lord, "He works all things together for good to them who are the called, according to His purpose." As I am a servant, and could not go to town on a Sunday, not for the day, the family I am living with was from home, but we expected them every day to return, but they did not so soon as we

expected, therefore I went with my friend to hear you on the second Sunday in October, which I hope never to forget; your text that morning was from *James v. 15*. Well, sir, I thought this different preaching to what I had been accustomed to hear, and such a sweet hope sprung up in my soul that the Lord had began a work of grace, for you stated many things I had experienced as regards soul trouble. I went again in the evening, but I must just notice here, it was not my intention to hear you in the evening, but to hear Dr. Campbell; but, sir, the Lord would have His way, and I hope I have been enabled to see it is a right way, although contrary to flesh and blood. Your text in the evening, *Jeremiah vi. 16*, I cannot describe to you what I felt, it was just what my poor burdened soul wanted, the light that shone into my soul as you advanced the blessed truths made it melt; this was the salvation for me, wrought out and finished in the dear Redeemer, and applied by the Holy Spirit to the soul. I felt assured the Lord had began a work of grace in my soul. I could then see the delusion I had been in, and the emptiness of the preaching I had been hearing. The minister I heard was a moderate Calvinist by profession, but preached free will as much as Wesleyans; he held election as a bible doctrine, but said no person had anything to do with it; I thought so too, but trust the Lord has made me to know better now. My soul went out to the Lord in praise for bringing me into the right way. You described that evening exactly my state, and I felt there was salvation for unworthy me, independent of all my sins, many as they are. I could then see the high doctrines were true, although I had been so prejudiced against them. They held out the only hope for a poor sinner to be saved, as I felt myself to be. You held forth the dear Redeemer as the saviour of his people from everlasting to everlasting: that he loved them with an everlasting love, and in tender mercy he draws them. On this was my hope that evening, and on the righteousness of the dear Redeemer; and I hope, sir, I can say the Lord has loved me with an everlasting love, and in tender mercy has drawn me to him. I went homethe evening praising the Lord as well as I could for his mercies to me, for I felt what a vile sinner I had been. I was enabled to see his goodness to me in times past. His long suffering and tender mercy not willing I should perish, but be brought to repentance, and I felt also thankful to him for bringing me to see and feel the truth. After this I felt very low in spirits. I wanted an evidence, my sins were pardoned, but still, sir, I had a hope that the Lord would forgive me; and he opened a way in his providence for me to hear you the Sunday fortnight. I felt very much cast down. Your text that evening was from

Hosea, vi. 3. It was just the food my soul wanted. How I did enjoy it that evening, particularly as you spoke a little on these words, "for he hath torn, and he will heal us, he hath smitten, and he will bind us up." I trust I have experienced it by these words being applied to my soul, "I cast all thy sins behind my back." "I will cast thy sins into the depths of the sea, and will remember them no more." And I do desire to bless the Lord, that he hath not appointed me unto wrath, but to obtain mercy. I do feel at times, sir, to be in very great darkness; but when I have an opportunity of hearing you, I feel so raised up again, that I can rejoice in the Lord. After being in great darkness of soul a short time ago, I had an opportunity of hearing you from this portion of scripture in *Luke*, xxi 42 and 43. You described my feelings, sir, better that evening, than I could myself; and last evening, as the family is from home, I was privileged to hear you, and my soul was set at liberty. I was enabled to see the dear Redeemer by the eye of faith as suffering for me, for my sins. I felt it good to be in the house of the Lord. I felt it to be the house of God, and the gate of heaven to my soul; and I do desire to bless the Lord for all his mercies unto me, unworthy as I am of the least of his mercies, and when I am enabled to see the way he has led me in delivering me from all those God dishonouring and soul delusive doctrines of free willism and moderate Calvinism, which is quite as bad, that robs God of his glory and debases the dear Redeemer. I can say feelingly, "What hath God wrought?" And that he has enabled me to come out from among them and be separated; but not, sir, without hard names being heaped upon me, but that, sir, the Lord I trust will enable me to bear, and I do feel a desire to cast in my lot among you, to be more connected with the people of God. There is one thing, sir, I should like to have an interview with you; and if you think these lines worthy of an answer, will you please to write, and say what would be the most convenient time for me to see you at your residence, as I am in bonds as a servant, I cannot go out at any time; but I think I could call upon you this week, if it would be convenient to you? Please to excuse all imperfections, and

I remain, Sir, yours humbly,

R. K.

DISCORD AMONG BRETHREN.

DEAR FRIENDS,—I address you as brethren, though probably, like Job, a stranger outwardly; but be that as it may, I hope we have the same Father, and ultimately shall unite in the same song, to him that has loved us, &c. &c. But I have a pain,

ful task to perform, which has induced me to write to you. I remember once hearing a faithful man of God preach from these words, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity," &c.; but, alas, dear Editors, I find the very reverse of unity. Instead of the fruits of the Spirit, *Gal. v. 22*, &c., Paul speaks of, I find the fruits of the flesh so prominent, even among those who profess to be on the Lord's side, that it makes me groan and sigh, and often times to say, "Lord, what is man!" What does the master say, "If ye love me, keep my commandments; and this is my commandment, that ye love one another." *But, oh sirs*, how much the reverse. Well might Isaiah say, "How has truth fallen in the streets, and equity cannot enter." I belong to a church militant, but I have often been pressed down with sorrow to see the inroads Satan makes even amongst God's family; for instead of peace there is a sword, instead of love there is hatred, instead of humility there is such awful pride, that my very soul has been moved within me, and I have been ready to say, "Is there, after all, any reality in religion?" Had I not felt its power, I should have said, "If this is all religion does for them, away with it; it is not worth having." I write this with sorrow, but let us come to particulars; and the first thing I would ask, is this, is it right for a minister or deacon to say to the church over which they are placed, "You shall not act, speak, or do any thing, but such as we think fit for you to do." For instance, being a member of a church as I before named, I am not allowed to propose any minister or matter to the church except I first obtain the approbation of the deacons, God having deprived us of a minister; and if I attempt it, I am set down as a disturber in Israel; and if I persisted, I should, as others have, be suspended or cut off. And now for the word of God. Peter, when writing to the strangers, &c., thus writes, "neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock," &c. I would ask, what sort of an ensample is that which would suspend or separate a brother or sister for acting in strict accordance with God's word? I think you would hardly credit the fact, but I will relate a matter which took place a short time ago. A minister who has been well received amongst us as a church, but one whom our elders have very ill treated, and in fact positively forbidden to come among us on any consideration,—this man of God, a many of our people wished to hear once more; accordingly one of our members went to the deacons requesting them to lend the chapel for him to preach in; if they would not send for him as a supply; but though they did not stop him from asking the church for that permission, yet they pointedly gave him to understand they should oppose him

with all their might; consequently he had to engage another chapel for him to preach in. But my brother having offended them by taking such a step, they visited him; and afterwards, when I told them publicly that according to God's word they were to forgive a brother his trespasses on acknowledgment of his fault, &c., one of them told me publicly, that all the Scriptures in the world should not convince him, &c. On hearing this I left the meeting; and oh the restless hours I had on account of such ungodly steps. Why, my dear brethren, how unlike the conduct of our elder brother, even in his last conflicts; we read, all the disciples forsook him and fled, and one swore he never knew him; and yet when he rises again, he comes, "Children, have ye any meat?" What, dear Lord, and after such treatment, dost thou come with such a loving, melting, heart-breaking, and such soul-humbling language as this, after such base treatment? and as though this was not enough, hear him say, "Go and tell Peter that I am risen."

Ah, my brethren, well might the apostles say, leaving us an example, that we should follow his steps; but alas, alas, how do we follow those steps in biting and devouring one another? Indeed, sirs, I do not understand such a spirit as that, as I once said to one of our deacons, "Will my brother sacrifice truth for the sake of peace?" No, sirs; I love peace, but I detest having it at the expence of truth. Where are we when we set aside the word of truth to serve our own purposes? God forbid that we should be left to join in any such a confederacy; and I am at a point in exclaiming with one of old, "O my souk, come not thou into such a secret;" &c. But again, when I read a brother's description of charity, its works, actions, and movements, as in *Cor. xiii.*, and contrast that love with the professed love in our day, I am satisfied that either Paul was wrong or we are; but let God be true, and every man a liar. Look at the master again; when he was reviled, he reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not, &c.; he was brought as a lamb to the slaughter, yet he opened not his mouth; and mark what one of the same family says, "If I love *not* my brother, whom I have seen, how can I love God, whom I have not seen?" I speak experimentally when I say, wherever or whenever I see the marks of a sheep in the feeblest child in existence, I can feelingly give them the right hand of fellowship; nor dare I say, stand by thyself, for I am holier than thou. No, my dear friends, I feel too much the plague within, to say or do that; and I sometimes think, well, if they are right, I am wrong; and do you know, it leads me to David's spot to say, "Search *ME*, O God, and know my heart; try me, &c." Indeed, sirs, I see far more consistency in the world, they are a noble

example to many professors ; witness the conduct of Agrippa to Paul, *Acts, xxvi.* 1 ; but that favour is not even granted to those who are to judge angels, much less smaller matters. Oh that one and all who profess to be followers of Jesus, were but led to walk, act, and speak, according to that royal law spoken by the lawgiver, "Love thy neighbour as thyself, and do to others as ye would they should do to you." Joseph said to his brethren, "See that ye fall not out by the way ;" and a greater than Joseph has said, "This is my commandment, that ye love one another ;" but I have said often with sorrow, that that law of love might have been abrogated altogether, and hatred put in its place. Indeed, I have often thought with David, "Tell it not in Gath ; publish it not in the streets of Ashkelon ; lest the daughters of the Philistines triumph." Oh, but, say some, we do it for the sake of peace ; whilst others say, how do you know but you may be wrong as well as others. Well, to the word and the testimony, let that decide ; yes, and we shall be right while we have a "Thus saith the Lord" to stand upon, and no longer.

Well, after all, I do not envy them ; I would rather be the oppressed than the oppressor ; if I know any thing in reality, I know that it has often drove me to a throne of grace when I might not have gone without, and I can appeal to an heart-searching God and say, that it was and is for the sake of truth and liberty that I plead ; and would say to all professors, "Talk no more so exceeding proudly ; let not arrogancy come out of your mouth ; for our God is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed, and if we cannot produce a 'Thus saith the Lord' for our words and actions, the sooner we give up such a line of conduct the better." But again, if there be two places of worship where the truth is preached, if there be a desire at times to try the spirits, by giving each a hearing, if it be once known that any one has gone from the one to the other, they are immediately set down as having itching ears, runaways, or some other name, as they think of reproach. Their Master's conduct was far different ; when one came to him, saying, "We saw one casting out devils in thy name, and we forbid him, because he followeth not us," what was the Master's reply ? "Forbid him not," &c. ; not for a moment attempting to feed their lordly pride, but plainly said, "he that is not for us is against us." What, I would ask, is there to be only one true labourer in such a large town as M——, because short-sighted, weak-minded man thinks so. May I not live to see that day when the word of God shall be so bound, though I fear it ; but I must say, at present—farewell.

Manchester.

JOHN.

REMARKS ON THE ABOVE.

We have somewhat hesitated to give the above a place in our pages, lest we should be going beyond our rightful province, but as the above letter contains (as we believe) truth, and as it is written in a right spirit, and as it appears the members at the chapel to which he alludes are somewhat oppressed, and as our contemporary, the *Standard*, exhorts the children of God to contend for church meetings, and their liberty to speak their minds thereat, and as there appears to us to be nothing unscriptural in this (that is if they speak and act in the *spirit of the gospel*) we think we are not doing wrong in allowing our pages to give expression to those things, which are to be lamented.

It is needful for those who are Deacons of churches to be firm and decided in truth and godliness, and all that pertaineth thereto, and not be soon shaken in mind; but if this firmness be not directed by wisdom, and prudence, and truth, and kindness, if this firmness be not directed by these qualities, it degenerates into obstinacy, prejudice, bigotry, and wrath, and will punish its authors much more than its objects. And when poor dying worms attempt to make laws which *altereth not*, and especially if they are made against any servant of God, against any whom he has made his own, it is not unlikely that such persons may live to see the inconvenience of such laws. Of such human laws Haman took advantage, and thought to bring Mordecai to the gallows; little did Haman think that he himself was to be hanged thereon; and little did Daniel's accusers think that for Daniel there would be a way of escape from the law of the Medes and Persians, which *altereth not*, and that they themselves must die in the pit which they had appointed for Daniel.

Do not these things admonish us to walk humbly, and remind us that the judge standeth at the door, and when ministers and churches enter into any resolution as to finally receiving or rejecting a man, should it not be with an *if the Lord will*.

And we hope truth, grace, and mercy, will yet reign in Manchester, and that Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and that Judah shall not vex Ephraim, but that not only causes of truth, which are now in Manchester, may flourish and prosper, but that many more in that vast, growing, industrious, and intelligent population, that many more causes may yet spring up, and then those who cannot feed in one gate may feed in another. As it is written, and "Thou shalt not deliver unto his master a servant that is escaped from his master unto thee; he shall dwell *with* thee, even among you, in that place which *he* shall *choose* in one of thy gates; and thou shalt *not* oppress him." *Deut. xxiii., 15, 16.*

Eds.

THE RIGHTEOUS SHALL HOLD ON HIS WAY.

DEAR GEORGE,—After I had written my last letter there was an impression left on my mind that perhaps you might conceive that I had written with unbecoming severity, be assured that my intention was not any personal affair, the subject demanded all my energies, and ought to be distinctly separate from the invariable good feeling we have always had towards each other, let these good feelings remain the same. I feel a wish to resume the subject, but you may be tired of it, or it may become uninteresting; but there are several particulars, which I intended to touch upon in my last letter which I was obliged to leave for want of room, and probably they might as well have been left; but as I have gone so far, I may as well go on, presuming you will not take any personal offence, which I am particularly desirous not to give.

You say, "St. John, in this chapter, seems to strive to arm those christians to whom he wrote against the errors and efforts of Antichrist, the grand *Apostate*," and a little further you say, "by which we understand Apostacy," and you have repeated the word five times. Now I do insist upon it there is no such person in existence as an apostate; nor there never has been since the days of our Saviour. *The word itself is not to be found in scripture*; but giving it its full meaning it does not belong to those for whom Christ died. The meaning you have given in your first quotation is, "Antichrist, the grand apostate," that is, one that is turned from Christ against Christ. Now I will defy any in existence, "who have tasted of the heavenly gift, and have been made partakers of the Holy Ghost," to turn against Christ; fall away they may for a time, or more properly backslide, they may; but they never, never can turn against Christ, nor become Anti-christ: neither can they be apostates, the *seed within them*, (look at that beautiful scripture) prevents *apostacy*. All the time I was a backslider I never could utter a word against Christ, neither could I bear his name to be called in question or spoken against. All the world, and all the riches in the world, and all the devils in hell, could not make me an *Antichrist* or an *apostate*; every soul that is born of God, "their life is hid with Christ in God," though they may not know it. I have got a *Pilgrim's Progress*, with notes by Mason; some years ago in reading these notes I felt dissatisfied with them, and I wrote other notes upon blank leaves and pasted them in the book. The part where this note on apostacy takes place is where Christian and Hopeful part with Ignorance, and it was thus, "So they both went on, and Ignorance he came after.

Now when they had passed him a little way they entered into a very dark lane, where they met a man whom seven devils had bound with seven strong cords, and they were carrying him back to the door they saw by the side of the hill. Now good Christian began to tremble, so did Hopeful, his companion; yet, as the devils led away the man, Christian looked to see if he knew him, as they thought he might be one Turnaway that dwelt in the town of Apostacy (6); but he did not perfectly see his face, for he did hang his head down like a thief that is found, but being gone past, Hopeful looked after him and espied on his back a paper with this inscription, 'Wanton *Professor* not a *Possessor*,' the whole of the difference lies between being a *possessor* and a *professor*. 'If any man hath not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his.' Mr. Mason wrote the following note (6), "Awful is the state of the apostate from the ways of God; his guilt and condemnation are more aggravated, his spirit is more hardened, his outward conduct is, for the most part, more abandoned than if he had never known the way of righteousness; he has crucified the son of God afresh and put him to open shame, and done despite to the spirit of grace. He is given up to a reprobate mind and to the power of Satan, and goes from bad to worse till he falls into the hands of the living God." All this is very fine upon paper; but when analysed it is a tissue of falsehoods. I wrote a note upon this, I should suppose twelve or fourteen years ago, and my note then began thus:—"It is quite impossible to be an *apostate* from the ways of God finally, if the soul has ever known the Lord and the way of righteousness, none but hypocrites and professors can be apostates." In this opinion I conceived, at the time and for several years afterwards, that I stood alone; but judge of my surprise and pleasure when a sermon fell into my hands, preached by one of the most enlightened and spiritual men in the kingdom, and in that sermon I found nearly my own words, he positively asserted there never was an apostate who had received the spirit of God in his soul. Now let us look at Mr. Mason's note over again,—“Awful is the state of the apostate from the ways of God; his guilt and condemnation are more aggravated, his spirit is more hardened, his outward conduct for the most part more abandoned than if he had never known the ways of righteousness.” Now, I will positively assert that the character thus drawn out never knew the way of righteousness; it is a fancy of his own brain, and it looks very pretty; but it is for want of knowing the redeeming love of the Lord Jesus Christ in his soul, which causes these note makers to commit such errors. I have been thus particular, because I would give you my reasons for believing it impossible for one of God's children to be an apostate. I thought, in my

former letter, of taking notice of your observation concerning the spirit of the Lord departing from Saul.

(To be continued in our next.)

ENQUIRY.

Messrs. Editors,—I am much obliged to you for your attention to the inquiry, "*Did John doubt?*" Hoping you will not think me troublesome, or prompted onward by the spirit of scepticism, for it is with the spirit of an enquirer after the mind of the Spirit of God in his word I make the enquiry. A right understanding in the word of God is a precious jewel. I can say, with the Psalmist, from my heart, *Psalm, cxix.* "*How sweet are thy words unto my soul; and through thy precepts I get understanding, therefore I hate every false way,*" and being directed by the words of Solomon, *Prov. xi. 14,* "*In the multitude of counsellors there is safety.*" It is under that consideration I again present this query before you. Is that soul, which is hungering and thirsting after righteousness, as described in *Matt. v.*, raised up and made to sit in a heavenly place in Christ Jesus? I do not mean to the exclusion of that full enjoyment of love that casteth out fear; but is that soul in Christ Jesus? If so, can that soul be in Christ, and not be in a heavenly place?

Messrs. Editors, an explanation in the matter will be received with thankfulness. If the Lord will, I will shortly give an account of the circumstance which has produced these inquiries; also give some account of the Lord's dealings with my soul as a pilgrim in a desert land; and remain yours, in the best of bonds,
Kingston. D. H.

ANSWER TO THE ABOVE.

The heavenly places spoken of *Eph. ii.* evidently mean the different departments and manifestations of the kingdom and glory of Christ. All heavenly places are summed up in these two, *grace* and *glory*; but nevertheless, the various stages of experiences and various revelations may be called *holy* places, or which is the same thing, heavenly places.

The soul that truly hungers and thirsts for righteousness, is *not* dead in sin; it is not in the congregation of the dead. It is not now reckoned one of the unclean; but is quickened into life, is joined to all living. It is reckoned clean, through the word spoken unto it; yea, it is born of an incorruptible seed, which liveth and abideth for ever; and what is this but a state (not of nature), but of grace? and if this be not a holy and heavenly place, then what is a holy or heavenly place? Is the kingdom of Christ a heavenly place? Then is not that soul which is translated out of the kingdom of Satan into the kingdom of God's dear Son, brought into a heavenly place? And does it not,

so far as it has possession of the kingdom, sit together with Christ Jesus? Is not Jesus the resurrection and the life of such? Could the soul come into the heavenly kingdom without Christ; and can it sit down satisfied? Can it find true rest any where but in the kingdom of God? If it can, why all this hungering and thirsting for the manifestation of pardoning mercy, for the enjoyment of peace with God, for peace, quietness, and assurance to be brought from on high, and rooted in the heart and conscience?

All such are *beginning* to possess the good land. They are brought into the valley of Achor, and this valley is part of the heavenly land; and here the Israelites were circumcised, kept the passover, and began to eat of the old store, *Joshua v*, and so the soul made to hunger and thirst, for righteousness becomes circumcised in heart and ear. The reproach of Egypt (slavery to sin and the devil) becomes rolled away. The goodness and mercy of the Lord become (as far as known) commemorated, and the ancient provisions of the new covenant become convenient food for and to such, they eat of the old corn of the land, the old store; and having a little of these things, makes them long for more, if so be they have tasted that the Lord is gracious; they will, as new born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word that they may grow thereby.

That more ample manifestations of heavenly glory and more exalted communion with God await such, are delightful and infallible truths, but to say that he who hungers and thirsts (truly) for righteousness, is not brought into a heavenly place; that he who has a living hope is not in a heavenly place, because he has not the full *assurance* of hope, is like declaring a tree to be dead because its fruit is not yet ripe, or like trying to prove that the prodigal was not admitted into his father's house until *after* he was clothed with change of raiment, or like trying to shew that the man who fell among thieves was not received into the inn until *after* his wounds were healed.

There no doubt are some who have the desire of the sluggard, and are set down for hungering and thirsting after righteousness, and yet their hunger and thirst do not disturb them. They are upon the whole, pretty easy, and go more after self and the world, than after God and godliness. Such cannot endure the cold of wint'ry tribulations for the truth's sake, therefore, in time of harvest they shall beg and have nothing; and shall, like the foolish virgins and the man with one talent, be cast into outer darkness.

And there are some who have come into an easy possession of full assurance, and are strangers both to real poverty of spirit and to real hungerings and thirstings after Christ. Such get

heavenly riches *nominally*, but not by right, are like the partridge taking possession of the nest of another bird; but when the right owner comes the intruder is obliged to give up possession, and is also counted as an offender, and so is he "that getteth riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at his end shall be a fool," *Jer. xvii. 11*.

But those who do *supremely* hunger and thirst for righteousness are brought into the beginning of the kingdom of God: theirs is the kingdom of heaven.—*Eds.*

ENQUIRY.

DEAR MESSRS. EDITORS,—I should be glad if you, or one of your correspondents, could give your thoughts on the second verse in the Hundred and Forty-seventh Psalm, and may the dear Lord direct you.

Ever Yours,
A LOVER OF TRUTH.

Near Trowbridge, Wilts.

THE SHULAMITE.

MESSRS. EDITORS,—The following is an original by Septimus Sears; having read it with much pleasure, and believing that it speaks forth that which all the Lord's people more or less are brought to feel, I thought you might give it place in the *Gospel Ambassador*. May you not be weary in well doing is the desire of yours, in truth,

London.

A SHULAMITE.

What will ye see in the Shulamite?
As it were the company of two armies.

What see ye in the Shulamite!
A pleasing, yet a horrid sight:
An army white from blemish free,
Another black as hell can be;
One loves the truth and hates all lies,
The other will God's truth despise;
One loves his solemn vows to pay,
The other loves to disobey;
One loves the sin atoning lamb,
The other hates to hear his name;
One presses on to joys to come,
The other boasts of what he's done;
One feeds on food no man hath seen,
The other feeds on lusts obscene;

One loves free grace that saves from ill,
The other brags of his free will ;
One leads his thoughts to things on high,
The other drags them from the sky ;
One's descended from the king of kings,
And lives by faith on heavenly things ;
The other of a meaner birth,
Bores like a muckworm in the earth ;
The one from God, loves God again,
T'other from hell, loves nought but sin ;
The one is pure, and free from sin,
The other, loathsome and unclean ;
The one's all fair, without a spot,
The other is a perfect blot ;
The one does right, and loves the light,
The one does wrong, and loves the night ;
The one delights in endless joys,
The other fond of trifling toys ;
The one to God's dear house, says, come,
The other says, do stop at home ;
The one delights to sing God's praise,
The other hates the Pilgrims lays ;
The one invites him to the throne,
The other gives him cause to groan ;
The one delights to hear God's word,
The other hates thy name O Lord ;
The one is joyful in his God,
The other's like a senseless clod ;
The one would make an endless stay,
The other longs to get away ;
The one produces heavenly rest,
The other will, his peace molest ;
The one desires to shun the tide,
The other, with the stream would glide ;
The one is of a holy seed,
The other of the devil's breed ;
The one desires Christ's righteousness,
The other loves a fig leaf dress ;
The one's a clean and harmless creature,
The other vile in every feature ;
The one is seen in Jesu's face,
Clear as the sun's meridian blaze ;
The other's vile as hell can be,
Can run in debt but never pay ;
One is fair as the Queen of night,
Receiving from the sun her light ;

The other black as Kedar's tents,
For ever sins, but ne'er repents ;
The one hates sins of every kind,
Loves holiness with heart and mind ;
The other's like the very devil,
Averse to good and fond of evil ;
The one is like a mourning dove,
Without a sense of Jesu's love ;
The other does rejoice to see
The heart brimful of enmity ;
The one laments, and hates to feel
The heart like ice, the soul like steel ;
The other loves when love's froze in,
When heart and soul grows hard in sin ;
The one delights by love to prove
The melting influence of God's love ;
The other fain would still remain
Rolling in sin, yet free from pain ;
The one, by faith, puts in her claim
Of interest in the atoning lamb ;
The other, with a brazen face,
Disputes my interest in his grace ;
The one for ever shews his ire
Against all filth, and mud, and mire ;
The other is much pleas'd to roll
In every stinking filthy hole ;
One loves to walk by faith with God ;
The other loves the bye-path road ;
One tries to lead my soul from sin ;
The other tries to drag me in ;
The one from heav'n to heav'n aspires,
And lift the soul in pure desires ;
The other, as from hell it came,
Can but lead back to hell again ;
The one would shout in rapt'rous lays,
Salvation is by sov'reign grace.
The other, hating sov'reign favour,
Boasts he's sav'd by good behaviour ;
One loves to join the heav'nly choir,
To sing God's praise on golden lyre ;
The other is content to dwell
On sinful strains that spring from hell ;
The one can tread the gloomy vale,
Give death by faith a welcome hail ;
The other dreads the appointed road,
To heav'n, to happiness, and to God.

THE
GOSPEL AMBASSADOR;
OR,
Christian Pilgrim's Friend.

“Blessed are the poor in Spirit, for their's is the kingdom of Heaven,” *Mat. v. 3.*

“The Election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded,” *Rom. xi. 7.*

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THE SONSHIP OF CHRIST.

Good morning, David.

Ah! what friend Bildad, how do matters go with you? I have not seen you for some time.

Bildad: Why no, for my minister tells me that you do not believe in the Son of God, that you are in very great error, and that unless you are brought to believe in the *proper* and *essential* Sonship of Christ, you cannot be saved, for he that believeth on the Son of God hath eternal life, and he that believeth not, shall not see life; and as you do not believe on the Son of God, I have kept away from you, lest I also should be led into error.

David: And so your minister has informed you that I do not believe on the Son of God?

Bildad: Yes, he has indeed.

David: But I do believe on the Son of God, only, perhaps, not exactly in *your* way. Would you have me speak contrary to my convictions?

Bildad: No, certainly not; but your convictions may be erroneous, and you may see things in a false light.

David: True, and I suppose it would be most awful presumption to suggest the *possibility* of *your* being wrong and seeing things in a false light?

Bildad: Why, I have the word of God on my side, and you have not; you are not a believer, but only a mere *reasoner*; and so my minister tells me.

David: Is your minister infallible?

Bildad: He has the word of God on his side.

David: I do not wish to question, but both your minister and yourself *sincerely* think you have the word of God on your side, and I do as sincerely think I have the word of God on my side; have you any reason to question my sincerity in this matter?

Bildad: Well, no, not exactly.

David: Not exactly; have you any just reason at all to question my *sincerity*? if you have, tell me so plainly; for if we cannot converse upon these momentous matters without assuming to ourselves infallibility, and suffering our bigotry and prejudices to govern our better judgment,—if we cannot converse without this, we had better at once drop the subject, for I have done with angry controversy; angry controversy can bring no good to our souls, nor any gratitude to the God of all our mercies. I do not question your sincerity in this matter; you hold the Sonship of Christ in one way, and I in another, and we both sincerely believe that we have for our respective conclusions the authority of the scriptures; and if you have any reason to question my sincerity in this matter, tell me what that reason is.

Bildad: Well, friend David, I cannot question your sincerity, but I do not like that in you which I believe to be error.

David: May I not say the same of you?

Bildad: But still it is a serious thing not to believe in the proper and essential Sonship of Christ, and to hold him as the Son of God merely by office.

David: In what do you consider the proper and essential Sonship of Christ to consist?

Bildad: Why that, as a divine person, he was begotten from all eternity, that he is the Son of God by eternal generation, and that apart from his human nature considered, and apart from the covenant, and apart from all official relation to the church whatever.

David: Well, these are bold and weighty assertions; and to charge me with denying the Son of God, and not believing in what you are pleased to call the proper and essential Sonship of Christ, is certainly assuming a great deal, and especially as you have not in the whole range of the Bible one, *no, not one* scripture to bear you out in the above threefold assertion.

Where are we told that as God he was begotten from eternity, or that he was *begotten before* time at all? "*This day* have I begotten thee," is the language of scripture.

Begotten from all eternity! give me *one* scripture that either expresses or clearly implies such a doctrine, and I shall feel bound to receive it.

Again: Where in all the Bible is he said to be the Son of God by eternal generation? *Isa. liii. 8*, gives no support to such a sentiment; the word generation, evidently refers there to his people, and perhaps to his own genealogy, as set forth by the evangelists: and his people are called, the generation of the upright.

Again: Where in all the Bible is he set forth as the Son of God, apart from the new covenant, and from his complexity?

In the *Gospel Ambassador*, November, 1844, there was a zealously written piece to prove that he was set forth as the Son of God, without any reference to the complexity of his person ; and it was a piece not only zealously written, but very feasilby and powerfully written ; but in the next month appeared a reply, and as completely swallowed up the other piece, as ever Aaron's rod swallowed up the rods of the magicians of Egypt. I advise you to read both those pieces, and you will, if you read fairly, see how completely "A Little One" has put "A Lover (as he calls himself) of Old Fashion Divinity" to silence. You read these pieces, friend Bildad, and perhaps you may come into my way of thinking upon this matter.

But let me keep to the subject in hand ; now, then, you say that our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, as a divine person, was begotten from eternity—that he is the Son of God by eternal generation—and that as a divine person, he is the Son of God apart from the new covenant, and apart also from all reference to his complexity—this is *your theory*, while you have not one, no, not one scripture to support such a theory ; and yet both you and your minister charge me with not believing in the proper and essential Sonship of Christ. And what does this charge in reality amount to but to this, that I believe your theory to be *unscriptural*, and that therefore I feel *bound* to reject it ?

And you also call me a *mere reasoner*, but not a believer ; and yet you give a theory in your way and reason upon the Sonship of Christ, and make it lay straight with your reason as far as you can, and then you would take me into the regions of contradiction and absurdity. The dark unfathomed part of your theory is to be dignified with the name of *mystery*. And so you have the same answer for this part of your theory, as the Catholic Priest gives to any one who asks how the wafer and the wine can be turned into the flesh and blood of Christ, O, this is a *mystery*, you must not reason upon it, for if you reason upon it you are a heretic. And so, according to your theory, Jesus Christ, as a divine person, is begotten, yet underived, eternally generating, yet self-existent. That holy thing which was born of Mary was called the Son of God, yet he is the Son of God without any reference whatever to his complexity, and because your name is Legion you think to force down into silence the few who may venture to read the word of God for themselves.

Bildad: Well, really friend David, I do not know but there may be some truth in what you say, for I did not think I was so bad of for scriptures to help me out, for I cannot at this time think of one, nor indeed (though it did not strike me before) has my minister given me any *proof* you were in error, he only

told me you were in error ; but if it should turn out that he *has* been deceiving me (I do not mean intentionally), this will make me change sides, for, in the first place, I begin to fear the word *begotten* in the theory of my minister, is almost, if not quite, destitute of meaning ; and certainly if the trumpet give an unmeaning sound, then who shall prepare for the battle ? For I never heard my minister explain the meaning of the word *begotten*, when applied to the divine nature of Christ ; he has often shewn what it does *not* mean. That it does not mean derivation, or beginning to exist, nor inferiority to the Father and the Holy Ghost ; that it does not mean minority, for that Christ as God is every way equal with the Father and the Holy Spirit. He thus shews, or rather tells us what the word *begotten* does *not* mean, yet he never attempts to shew us what it *does* mean. The same remarks apply to the words *eternal generation*. I confess it sounds rather awkward to attach so much importance to the words “*begotten*” and “*eternal generation*.” To attach so much importance to these words, as to say that Jesus Christ is the Son of God by *eternal generation*, and by being *begotten* from all eternity ; to attach this vast importance to these words, and yet not to have the most distant idea of their meaning, is, I confess, rather an awkward position. And when I come to look *at* it, I am half ashamed *of* it, but still I am not exactly moved yet.

David : Moved, no ; you are too heavy to be easily moved.

Bildad : Well, friend David, better be heavy than light.

David : I do not know that ; my namesake of old was a better man with the scrip and sling than in Saul's heavy armour.

Bildad : Well, you need not throw out hints as though my minister's theory was nothing but Saul's heavy armour ; let us pursue the subject in hand, and let us see what your theory is, for no doubt you have your theory, and indeed my minister told me you would believe nothing but what you could understand and bring within the grasp of your reason.

David : Well, I do not believe there is anything in the scriptures contrary to *right* reason, but still I do believe a great many things which I cannot understand. I believe all scripture is given by inspiration of God, but I am sure I do not *understand* all scripture, or indeed but very little, yet I believe all.

I believe that there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and that Christ has two natures, but is but one person ; these things, and all that is revealed in Scriptures, I believe, and that from the testimony of God.

And I believe the word *begotten* is applied to the Saviour in *three different* senses :

First. In purpose, as in the second Psalm, "I will declare the decree, thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee," that is, in decree; I will declare the decree.

Secondly, In conception, *Luke, ii. 31 and 35.*

Thirdly, To his resurrection from the dead, *Rev. i. 5.*

All of which bear special reference to his manhood, and cannot apply only in the relative but not in the absolute sense to his divine nature; that is to say, that *that* which was begotten was man, but He who was begotten was God as well as man; and so, by virtue of the *oneness* of his whole complex person, the words "Son of God" are applied to his divinity as well as to humanity. "Unto the Son," he saith, "thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever." He is the first and last, and only begotten Son of God; no other ever was or ever can be what he is, God and man in one person.

Bildad: What, then, do you understand where it is said, when he bringeth in his first begotten into the world he saith, "And let all the angels of God worship him?"

David: Why, the whole person of Christ; for while humanity was and must be first begotten before it is brought into the world, yet as he did hereby, as a divine person, take humanity, we must not put that asunder which God hath joined together. I do not believe that he is here called the first begotten, because, as a divine person, he was begotten from eternity; and the reason I do not believe this, is because the scriptures do not support, in my view, any such sentiment. I believe, therefore, that that which was begotten was human, but that he who was begotten was divine; not that the term begotten is ever applied to his divinity apart from his humanity; first begotten has the same meaning as *only* begotten.

Bildad: Well, you are *reasoning* now upon what cannot be explained.

David: Well, you reasoned just now, and by your reasoning you arrived at certain conclusions, and I am now taking the same liberty as you did, and am endeavouring to set before you that in which consisteth the proper and essential Sonship of Christ, that you may see that I do believe in what I hold to be the proper and essential Sonship of Christ. I do not believe in your theory, but I believe in that which I conclude is the testimony of God in this matter. Pray allow another the same liberty of conscience which you claim and make a pretty free use of for yourself.

I will sum up my views of the matter in few words, and direct you to the first chapter of the gospel by John, which chapter contains complete my—shall I say creed, upon the person and Sonship of Christ. "In the beginning was the Word, and

the Word was with God, and the Word was God." Now here we have the pure Godhead of Christ set forth and positively asserted; he is therefore a self-existent and eternal person, coequal and coeternal with the persons of the Father and the Holy Ghost, three distinct coequal persons, yet one self-existent, infinite, and everlasting God. Jesus Christ, therefore, as God, is absolutely eternal; and if the new covenant be eternal, if the decree I before referred you to (*Psal. 2nd*), if this decree be eternal, if his (the DIVINE word) goings forth were from of old, even from everlasting, and if the mercy of the Lord be from everlasting, and if (*Isa. lxi. 16*) his name as a Redeemer be from everlasting, then *all* that this divine Word is to be to everlasting,—then all this he must have been virtually and relatively from everlasting, for unto God there is no new thing under the sun.

And is it not a matter of delight supreme, that our Lord Jesus Christ is revealed as one in whom it is not a robbery to be equal with God—that he is a self-existent person in the sacred eternal three—and that at the end he shall, as the Son of God, deliver up the kingdom to the Father—that the Son shall be subject to the Father—that God, Father, Word, and Holy Ghost may be all in all? Jesus Christ is indeed the Son of God, but he is *something more* than the Son of God,—he is Jehovah, God over all, blessed for evermore.

I do not then believe that it is by his being as a divine person, begotten from eternity, that he is the eternal Son of God, nor (as some have said) by constantly generating from the Father, as a ray of light is constantly deriving its existence and brightness from the sun; you are perfectly welcome to all such reasoning and to such divinity for me; give me the testimony of the Holy Ghost, and with that I am willing to stand or fall.

Bildad: But you do not then believe in the eternity of Christ's Sonship?

David: I believe that Jesus Christ is Jehovah, that he is God, and that he is nowhere throughout the Bible set forth as the Son of God apart from the new covenant, or apart from reference to his complexity; and this leads me to the conclusion that, as the new covenant is eternal, and as the decree (*Psal 2*) is eternal, and as the counsels of God in these matters are eternal and immutable, so the Sonship of Christ is by virtue hereof *eternal*; and though I have no express scripture to bear me out with this conclusion, yet the whole force of scripture testimony runs in this direction; whereas for your begotten and generating divinity, you have not only no scripture testimony running in that direction, but the whole word of God bears against your theory; for the word of God declares Christ to be Jehovah, and

whereas your theory (say what you may to the contrary) carries with it a denial of his absolute equality with the Father; and I hardly know which is the most to be avoided, pre-existerianism or eternal generationism.

Who would think it, that persons professing to believe in the proper Godhead of Christ, could call him the *second* person in the Trinity; He may appear second in the economy of grace and order of salvation,—but *abstractedly*, as one of the eternal three, it cannot apply to him.

I therefore believe the proper and essential Sonship of Christ to consist, not in being as a divine person begotten from eternity, nor in generation, but that his proper and essential Sonship consists, first, in what he was virtually from everlasting; second, in what he became in the fulness of time; third, in what he will be to all eternity; and thus from everlasting he was God, and virtually and in the *truth* of the decree, and in favour divine he was the Son of God in *truth and love*, and in the fulness of time came into open Sonship; “that holy thing which shall be *born* of thee shall be called the *Son* of God.” “God hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son,” and this Son being God as well as the Son of God, he by him made the worlds. The 1st of John opens this matter up very clearly, where he is revealed as God absolute, as the Creator absolute, as taking our nature; the word was made flesh, and thus appeared as the Son of God, full of grace and truth; and yet you, who have not one scripture to bear up your old Athanasian theory, charge me with not believing in the proper and essential Sonship of Christ. Why,

“I scorn your *coarse* insinuation,
And have most *plentiful* occasion.”

COWPER.

Bildad: Well, friend David, you have certainly been misrepresented; but I think you are getting rather too warm, almost approaching to language intemperate. You were the first to bring in the law of mildness, and the first to break it.

David: Why you seemed to be half asleep, and I had a mind to keep you from going off quite.

Bildad: No, I was not half asleep, but I began to feel the ground give way under me, and to suspect that my minister has been amusing himself with unmeaning phraseology, for really I cannot forget it that he condemns you for not believing in the Sonship of Christ, the same way that he does; and yet when I ask him what the words “begotten” and “generation” mean, when applied to the divine nature,—when I ask him the meaning of these words when so applied, he cannot tell me; and yet he condemns you for not believing what he himself does not know or has the slightest idea of the meaning of.

But still I see you both contend for the distinct, the personal and proper divinity of Christ, and that in the fulness of time he took our nature, so I see you are both alike, and both agree as to the nature of the person and work of Christ, but you differ upon the question as to *how* he is the Son of God. You both believe he is the Son of God—yea, you both believe he is God and the Son of God, and my conscience would not allow me now, after this conversation, to assert that you are in error relative either to the doctrine of the Trinity or to the Sonship of Christ.

And really I am from this conversation led to see the *emptiness* of some of the great swelling questions put by eternal generationists relative to the dignity of Christ.

David: What questions do you mean?

Bildad: Why, as a specimen, I would just name two or three that I have lately seen in print, such as, "If he be the only Son of God by incarnation, and not by essential Deity, how is it that all honour is to be paid to him equal with the Father and the Holy Ghost?"

Again: "If he be the Son only by incarnation, then how is he to judge the world?" And, again, "If he be a Son only by incarnation, how is it the apostle lays such stress upon his Sonship?" What do you, friend David, think of such questions?

David: Why I happened to see the piece to which you allude, and I think the writer is aiming to cut up Sebellianism, but he certainly goes a most clumsy way to work, and loses both himself and his reader in a maze of absurdity, and such questions, a sample of which you have given, have a tendency rather to *deny* than to establish the proper and personal divinity of the Son of God, for it is not because he is a *Son*, that honour equal with the Father and the Holy Ghost is to be paid to him, but because he is God *as well* as the Son of God; not merely because he is *a* Son, that he is to judge the world, but because he is *something more* than a Son—he is the I AM. Nor is it merely because he is a Son, that such stress is laid upon his Sonship; but because he is God. This same person who is a Son, is also God. "Unto the Son, he saith, thy throne, O God, is for ever;" and besides all this, there is not only the personal character of Christ to be considered, but also his *relative* position in the order of the new covenant, and in the government and judgment of the world. It is in this relative position that certain blessings and powers are said to be bestowed upon him; and thus we find, not as God but as the Son of God, and as the Son of man, powers and blessings are bestowed upon him. Both these nominations, Son of God, and Son of man, mean the same thing, and both include the two natures of Christ, which I prove thus: "That holy thing which shall be born of thee,

shall be called the Son of God." Again: "Even the Son of man, which is in heaven."

Again: "The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live: marvel not at this, for the hour cometh when all that are in the graves shall hear his voice," &c. *John, v.* Then again, *John, vi.* "He that eateth the flesh and drinketh the blood of the Son of man, hath eternal life, and I (*the Son of man*) will raise him up at the last day." Thus the resurrection is to be by the Son of man, or (which is the same in meaning) the Son of God.

And so it is in this character, as Son of God, or Son of man, that blessings and powers are bestowed upon him; and thus it is written, *John, v. 22, 23*, the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son, that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father.

Again, verse 27, "He hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man;" but if he were not God as well as the Son of God, if he were not God as well as man, he would not be capable of managing such vast affairs; for no mere man could be found able so to do (*Rev. v.*). As the Son of God, and as the Son of man, he is said to live by the Father, *John, v. 26*; for as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he *given* to the Son to have life in himself.

Thus, friend Bildad, we must mark the distinction between his person and character abstractedly as Jehovah, one of the self-existent and eternal three, and his character as the Son of God, as the Son of man, as the head and mediator of the church; his self-existence as Jehovah is essential to all these new covenant relations, for unless he were God he could not be one in that mercy which is from everlasting, nor could his goings forth have been from of old even from everlasting, nor could he have taken upon him the seed of Abraham, nor have wrought eternal salvation; he could not be God manifest in the flesh, unless he were God.

I, therefore, whatever others may think, do not believe that the old Athanasian creed of eternal generation is a scriptural way of meeting either Sebellianism or any other error relative to the person of Christ; nothing but the truth will stand at last; and it is a truth that Jesus Christ is Jehovah, that he is God manifest in the flesh, that he is the true God and eternal life; and it is a truth that this divine person is never called the Son of God apart from any relation to his complexity; and it is a truth that his goings forth in covenant purpose were from eternity, and may thus be said to be the eternal Son of God; and it is a truth that Son of God and Son of man are terms which include his two natures as God and man in one person; but it is not a Bible revealed doctrine, that as God he was in any sense begotten

from eternity; and in my estimation it is a gross error (at least in words) to say that he is constantly generating from the Father as a ray of light is constantly generating from the sun.

To make the Sonship of Christ (as some do) stand opposed to his absolute deity, as the I AM, is to divide the person of Christ against itself, and can such a doctrine be according to truth?

There is in the doctrine of the Trinity an *infinite of mystery*, but there is *no contradiction*, because, although there are three in one and one in three, yet they are not set forth as being one in the *same sense* that they are three, nor three in the same sense that they are one; for this would be a *contradiction*, not a mystery. God is one as to self-existence, nature, greatness, eternity, mind and will, but three distinct yet indivisible persons, subsisting in one infinite Spirit; God is a Spirit, and who by searching can find out the Almighty to perfection?

Bildad: Well, I think it is lamentable that this difference of opinion upon the Sonship of Christ should be the cause of any ill-feeling whatever, for I do think more difference lies in the words than in the meaning; I mean, where both hold and reverence and love the great Redeemer in his essential dignity as the God-man mediator; and you, friend David, might as well have been a little more mild in some of your sentences.

David: Well, perhaps so, but if my opponents upon this matter speak as mildly to me as I have here of them, I will promise not to complain of them upon this point.

Bildad: I will trouble friend David with one more question, and then I must go, for time is running on; it is this: My minister tells me that the mystery of Christ lays in his Sonship, and that Agur, *Prov.* 30, seems to signify that none can tell what this name means, for he (Agur) asks, "What is his name? or, "What is his *son's name*? if thou canst tell." Now my minister says this refers to the Son of God; what do you think of this?

David: Why, I think your minister is wrong.

Bildad: You do?

David: Yes, I do.

Bildad: Well, then, prove it.

David: You read the whole six verses of Agur's prayer, as we call it, and it will prove and shew for itself that your minister is wrong.

Agur first shews what he knew of himself, "Surely I am more brutish than any man," &c.; he then goes on to state what he knows of men in general, knowing that great things were to be done for the salvation of sinners, but that no man, or the son of any man, had ever either completed or even commenced.

Who hath ascended up into heaven or descended—who hath gathered the winds in his fists—who hath bound the waters in a garment—who hath established all the ends of the earth—what

is his name? Who is the man that can pretend to all or any of these things? And what is his son's name? what mortal son of mortal man can boast of a mortal father that hath done these things? No; all is left for the *arm* of him who said, Lo, I come.

Then, after Agur had thus shown what he knew of himself and of other men, he then sets forth what he knew of God, that every word of God is pure, and that he is a shield unto all that put their trust in him, and that God will not suffer his truth either to be altered or to fail; "Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar."

So the view your minister has given is wrong.

Bildad: So it seems, but still his intention was good, and we all err at times, and who can understand his errors? I am not going to despise my minister because he is wrong in his view of this scripture, and I am half afraid he is wrong in his doctrine concerning Christ as God being begotten from all eternity, but still he holds that Christ as God is self-existent; and, as I said, I shall not despise him because he may be wrong upon some points, *but I shall certainly look more closely after him.*

But still, you know, the Saviour has a name which no man knoweth but himself only.

David: Well, of course he has; for both as God and as God-man, he is a mystery, infinite. Great is this mystery of godliness.

I seldom meddle with these controversial matters. My chief aim and object are to live in and upon and by the blessedness of vital godliness, praying in the Holy Ghost, more and more desiring to be directed into the love of God and patient waiting for Christ. This is the life, I trust, I am in some very humble measure enabled to live; but when my friend Bildad came and brought a direct charge against me of denying the proper and essential Sonship of Christ, I felt it right to answer for myself.

Bildad: Well, eternal generation certainly seems to me to divide the person of Christ against itself; at least, it seems so to me at present, and therefore almost, if not quite, friend David, thou persuadest me to be on thy side in this matter.

I will order of my bookseller the November and December numbers, 1844, of the *Gospel Ambassador*, to which you have referred, and when we meet again, we can, if need be, talk these matters over again.

DAVID AND BILDAD.

THE WAY OF REST.

(Continued from page 61.)

I am, first, to point out the soul's true rest; and then, secondly, to humbly endeavour to lead the weary sinner to it. And, *oh, that the holy, blessed Spirit*, may seal instruction to both writer and reader, agreeable to that precious promise, "All thy

children shall be taught of Jehovah, and great shall be the peace of thy children."

Now, firstly, the soul's true rest, is Jesus Christ, in his person, blood, righteousness, and eternal merit. The Holy Ghost awakens up the soul from the sleep of death, and sees the sinner anxiously enquiring, where true rest is to be found. Then after he enlightens the eyes of the understanding, gives a new heart to feel that solid and everlasting rest is in Christ, and is Christ. Lo! then, in believing we enter into rest. Oh! the immortal blessedness that is felt in the soul, in entering into this rest—how indescribably sweet are the beams of unmerited grace coming from Christ's fulness into the soul. This precious grace expels the sense of creature merit in a few moments; yea, know I that creature merit is so expelled by the entrance of grace, that the soul dare not, and would not, rest in it for salvation any more. Now, rest signifies cessation from labour; so in Christ the soul ceases from labouring for salvation after the flesh. Again, rest signifies a state of peace; so by faith, in Christ the soul enjoys that peace which passeth all understanding. What calmness, serenity, and sweetness of mind it produces; how tender is the heart and the affections under its blessed effects; yea, in our eyes his rest is glorious—it outstrips the glory of creation. The soul is effectually led to feel the emptiness and vanity of all things in contrast with this. The soul thus really knows, by precious faith, what it is to have the sincere milk of the word will often look back upon those times and wish them over again; yea, there is a holy remembrance of them, and a holy mourn for them. Oh! believer as often as we are led to think of those days, let us send up a thank offering to God the Father for his remembrance of us in electing love, for this is good in his sight.

Secondly, I will humbly lead the attention to this blessed rest, the Lord Jesus Christ. In him, God the Father rests in everlasting love to us; in him the Holy Ghost rests with equal love and eternal unction upon his church. Now, then, poor sinner, rest in his person; in his person thou wert elected, adopted, and accepted from eternity. This was an eternal act of the Father's good-will towards you, and is now made manifest in time to you by his Holy Spirit. He opens the heart and lets in these truths for ever. Now the person of Christ is the very foundation of the church, and upon him is every poor sinner brought to rest his immortal soul; hence, saith Jesus, come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and ye shall find rest for your souls. Now, I say, that the Holy Ghost first places the sinner upon Christ's mediation, and then upon his Almighty person. There is glorious rest to be realized in his mediation-work; but far surpassing rest, in his person. Yea, (with re-

verence would I speak,) when Christ's person is rightly apprehended, his mediation-work is only as a window through which he is seen in his personal glory. The spouse saith, "Our beloved sheweth himself through the lattice," which I humbly believe, means his mediation-work. Christ being God, as well as man, he is omnipotent, eternal, and immutable. Then upon him, poor sinner, thou mayest cast thyself and all thy burden, and he will sustain thee. He hath engaged himself by an oath so to do; he hath pawned heaven and earth, and have said that day and night shall cease, before he will cast away his people; he may cast them down, but this is not casting off, and the vilest sinner may come to him without any fear of being cast out of his presence. Where sin hath abounded, his grace hath superabounded, and shall, through righteousness, unto eternal life. Rest then in his personal ability, as thou hast a daily conflict with corrupt flesh, so thou wantest daily power to overcome it. Jesus then hath it; he is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him—come then to him and rest in his ability, and not in thy own, to overcome sin. Perhaps thou art of the tribe of Gad, a troop hath overcome thee and cast thee down? This is seen to be the case, when we look into ourselves; the strength of habitual grace is not sufficient to overcome, we must have grace from Christ's fulness, or else a sinful thought will be our master. Grace in us is not the rock of ages, this Peter knew. The Church of Rome is resting on Peter's grace as their rock; but as it let Peter down, so it will let them down. Rest poor sinner in his personal fulness. The Holy Spirit hath taught thee one grand lesson, which all the wisdom of this world could never have done, and that is, thy entire emptiness. He did this that thou mightest wholly rest on Christ's fulness; and let it be thy daily prayer, to be kept empty of sinful self, and be filled with Jesus's fulness in all spiritual wisdom and understanding. This, believer, is the only way to become strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Let not the sense of thy emptiness, though it be most cutting and wretched, I say, let this not discourage thee from coming to a full Saviour, "Thus, saith Jehovah, must be thy staff," and this credited in the heart will prop thy soul up in the hour of conflict with corrupt flesh. I believe that blessed Paul tottered, when he cried out, under a keen sense of his wretched nature; but he leaned upon his staff and cried out, "I thank God I shall have deliverance through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Rest, then, poor sinner, in his divine person; all that thou needest he hath, and all he hath, he intends to give thee; millions have received out of his fulness, yet he is none the poorer. Oh! what a precious, rich Saviour,—this is, indeed, the rest, wherewith he causeth the weary to rest—this is the sole refresh-

ing. Oh! the astonishing dignity of this Person; Him, who was the High and Lofty One, that inhabiteth eternity, should humble himself to dwell with mortal man. Yes, believer, that poor mean man, who was born at Bethlehem, and followed by a few poor fishermen, was indeed the eternal God, and oh! what unequalled condescension, that he, whom the heaven of heavens could not contain, should say, "Take my yoke upon you, learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls."

(If the Lord will,) to be concluded in the next.

CHRISTIANS COMPARED TO FINE GOLD.

A few thoughts on *Lamentations of Jeremiah*, ii. 4.

It appears that the Holy Ghost has ransacked the whole of nature to find metaphors to set forth the precious Sons of Zion in every stage of experience, and in their thoughts of themselves, and in the esteem of their enemies, and in the esteem of God, (when he will set them forth in their esteem of themselves a *worm* is a fit comparison,) and to encourage them in this humble feeling he says, "Fear not, worm Jacob and ye men of Israel, I will keep thee, saith the Lord and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel," *Isaiah*, xli. 14. When their weakness and their deficiencies are considered, a moth is a fit metaphor; and when the depravity of the heart is seen and felt, then rottenness of bones and filthy garments are an apt emblem; if in the esteem of the world, either professors or profane, earthen pitchers is the comparison. But when the Holy Ghost sets them forth in their relationship to their head, Christ, then he says, "The righteous are as bold as a lion," and in their beloved head they are compared to the noble and spirited horse pawing in the valley going to meet the armed men, "he mocketh at fear and is not affrighted: neither turneth he back from the sword. He swalloweth the ground in his fierceness and rage; he saith ha, ha, amongst the trumpets." Yes, we can do all things through *Christ* that strengthens us; but without him we can do nothing. To show their scarcity, value, purity, and solidity, the precious Sons of Zion are compared to fine gold, on which comparison I will try and offer a few thoughts on the present occasion.

First,—Gold is scarce and valuable, very expensive and difficult to obtain, rare to be found, and in small quantities; so are the precious Sons of Zion, and as amongst all the created mass of minerals there is comparatively little pure gold, so amongst all mankind there are but few compared with the bulk, who really know and feel their state either as sinners or saints. You may, indeed, find some who have the appearance or colour; but these are neither weight or measure when brought to the

standard of the sanctuary (*the Bible*). At first appearance, indeed, they seem like something as you may see your face in a well ; but when you meet with one whom Jesus has fetched from the bottom of the mountains, as the miner does his gold dust, and that knows what it is to be melted in a crucible, to be tried seven times in the fire of sufferings, he appears like a true mirror to you ; in his experience you can discern every feature of yourself from head to foot, yea, inside and out, and as conversation continues love kindles, jealousy dies, fear flies away, faith increaseth and spiritual affection unfolds her arms, and we embrace each other and receive the witness that we are born of God by love to the brethren, and find, as face answers to face in water, so one good man's experience answers to another. Thus are the precious Sons of Zion compared to fine gold for their scarcity ; but some will say, " but there is much talk now about evangelising the whole world." I know there is, and I shall believe them when they can turn all the created matter of earth and mineral into gold dust, and the element of air into a crucible, and the ocean into fuel to melt it, then and not till then shall I become an universalist, for I am aware that great as the performance of this might be, it is an infinitely less work than the conversion of one sinner to God. Those, then, I esteem as the precious Sons of Zion whose everlasting union to Christ is the cause of their being sought out and not forsaken ; but by calling grace are made manifest as the precious Sons of Zion.

Secondly,—Gold is expensive and difficult to obtain ; what infinite expense it cost the Son of God to redeem those precious Sons of Zion ; the miner has great quantities of mineral to move to obtain a small portion of gold dust. Christ had an infinite greater mass to remove to obtain his elect ; he had justice to satisfy, the holy law to fulfill, unbelief and sin to remove, before he could bring those precious Sons of Zion to light ; it cost him all the happiness and comfort of heaven for the time, and he must become a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and thus become extremely poor, that his Church might be made everlastingly rich ; the man that dives after pearls has to risk his life in the water, but Christ had to give up his life, and dive into the fire of God's vindictive wrath to recover his precious sons from eternal ruin ; but he spared no expense, and he wrought at no uncertainty, for he found those that were lost and perfected for ever those that were sanctified, and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed. But some people please themselves with the notion that after all some for whom Christ died and went to such infinite expense about, may at last he found in hell ; but there is one who can and will deliver the lawful captive.

Thirdly,—Purity is another prominent feature in gold ; and

so it is in the precious Sons of Zion. Gold is pure, inasmuch as no liquid, however pernicious, put into a golden cup, can ever instil its poisonous qualities into the pure gold; and what a blessing it is to consider that neither our sin or Satan's pernicious insinuations can ever instil their poison into that precious, implanted, imparted, and spiritual part so comparable to fine gold,—they are pure, being purified in the fire and washed in the precious blood of Christ, are made untarnishably pure, and denominated the precious Sons of Zion for purity.

Fourthly,—Solidity is another precious property of pure gold,—and this is peculiar to the precious Sons of Zion. They have felt the load of sin, and their just condemnation in consequence of it, and the utter impossibility of the creature struggling from under it,—yea, they have been cast down by it,—aye, and as completely smothered in it as the gold dust is that layeth at the bottom of the largest mountain. Yes, and they know who it was that found them there and extricated them from destruction, and by his own word and power melted and moulded them into his own image. Hence it is they become solidly established in their own helplessness, and that salvation is all of grace, and that by grace they are saved through faith. Hence amongst all their troubles they sing and say, "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal." The Lord knoweth them that are his, those are too well established to trade with promises of being better and paying presently, but solidly are they settled in the truth that sayeth, "Of your own selves ye can do nothing." Thus those that deal in promises to pay are all blown away with the storm, the solid sovereign remaining unmoved and uninjured by wind or wet. Thus the precious Sons of Zion are compared to fine gold for their solidity.

Fifthly,—It is moreover said that pure gold drawn into wire is sonorous when struck upon. I leave my readers to inquire into the truth of this statement, and only say if it is so. It much, very much resembleth the precious Sons of Zion, as I am well aware that those Sons when sounded have no matter for boasting, although they are the heirs of an everlasting inheritance, yet in this life they are mostly kept poor in spirit, and think themselves the meanest and most unworthy, and most unlikely to be of any service in God's cause, therefore you will not hear them sounding a trumpet before them as the hypocrites did, or as some of the learned in our day do, telling their audience that they have got texts formed for a year, nor yet giving out this week what they should preach from next, and exhorting the people to be present, as they believe they shall preach well. This is more like the sounding brass and the tinkling symbols than the sonorous Sons of Zion,—those have more often to search the word of God four or five days carefully and prayer-

fully for a text, and often have to retire on the Saturday night very dissatisfied with their week's discovery, and sometimes have to go to the pulpit without a text and undecided. So whatever may be the sounds of Sons of Music, the precious Sons of Zion are quite sonorous.

That the spirit of truth may abundantly influence the minds of his ministers to dig in the Gospel mines and bring to light many of the precious Sons of Zion, is the daily prayer of,

Your unworthy Servant,

JOHN CORBITT.

THE RIGHTEOUS SHALL HOLD ON HIS WAY.

(Continued from page 90.)

Aaron, Balaam, Saul, and Solomon were a very great puzzle to me for many years. It is wonderful, when you come to give it a consideration, how it would be possible for Aaron to make a golden calf, after seeing the wonderful works the Lord performed in Egypt by his and Moses's hand, after seeing the miracles wrought by the Lord before they reached Mount Sinai, after knowing the Lord was with them in a pillar of a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night, after experiencing the presence of the Lord the whole of their journey, to fall so soon to making and worshipping an idol. This shows me the depravity of man, and what he is capable of, without he is supported and protected by the almighty power of God. How many hundreds of thousands there are in this country now worshipping idols, only their idols bear a different name. There is no doubt but that Balaam had a spirit given him to perform the purposes of the Lord, and when those purposes were accomplished, that spirit was withdrawn; the same with Saul, Saul received the spirit of prophecy, and the Lord gave him another heart. Now I should suppose the spirit which Saul received, was a similar spirit to that which Balaam received. Sometimes the Lord permitted a lying spirit to accomplish his purposes. If you will read the 1 Kings, *xxii.* 22, you will find the Lord permitted a lying spirit to proceed and enter 400 prophets; the 23rd verse reads thus, "Now behold the Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets." You will find in 1 *Samuel*, *xvi.* 14, 15, "But the spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and an *evil spirit from the Lord* troubled him." How can we account for this? I can only say that, Moses and Aaron, Balaam and Saul, David and Solomon, were all under a covenant of works. A covenant was entered into between God and them, and engraven on two tables of stone, which covenant they never could fulfil till Jesus Christ came, and by one sacrifice fulfilled all law and all prophecy, and established a better covenant; this better covenant is prophesied of in a number of places, but more particularly

in *Jeremiah*, xxxiii, 40, you will find, "And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me." If you will read the *viii* of the *Hebrews* you will find there is a particular, and, I should think, a very satisfactory account of this new covenant. This covenant being sealed by the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, he has purchased a people for whom he has fulfilled the law, and they never can depart from him; and those precious promises you will find all through the new testament are a confirmation from his own mouth, that he will never leave us nor forsake us. And as a further confirmation, after he was risen from the grave, he says "John truly baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost, not many days hence:" and they were all baptized on the day of Pentecost with the Holy Ghost. And every chosen vessel must be baptized with the same Holy Ghost as the Apostles were baptized with; and you have had my opinion before of the immutability of the Lord Jesus Christ. And when this glorious anointing of the spirit of the Lord beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God, I will leave you to draw what inference you may think proper, whether this is the same spirit which departed from Saul, whether this spirit which departed from Saul, was the Holy Ghost the comforter which the Lord Jesus promised to his redeemed family, that should be with them always, even to the end. The term Holy Ghost is not named in the old testament at all, although the Holy Spirit is, which signifies the same thing; but in the new testament it is named nearly ninety times. Now look at the precious promises of the Lord Jesus in the new testament, and he laid down his life to fulfil those promises, and sealed them with his blood. It is impossible for the Lord Jesus to be guilty of falsehood; if he was, he would be a sinner, and if a sinner he could not have fulfilled the law, and become surety for those he died for. You say "It behoves every one who feels that they are made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and heirs of the kingdom of heaven, to take heed lest in time of temptation they fall away," *Luke*, 14. Now this is a very unfair quotation; only look at the context and compare it with your preceding sentence, and see if it bears any analogy. I have looked over and compared most of your quotations, and the principle part of them are as irrelevant to the purpose, as the one quoted. Most of your quotations are unregenerate characters, the one in question is a stony ground hearer, and you have joined this with the prayer of David, which is one of the most beautiful prayers that was ever offered to the Lord by a redeemed sinner, and what every redeemed soul must sometimes feel himself to be. Those persons you remember reading about,

who turned infidels, were only professors, they never had been recipients of the spirit of God. Your quotation from *Acts*, 18, 6, "Your blood be on your own head," is of the same description, they were not regenerate characters. Read *Romans*, 1, 28, over again, you see it carries the same mark of unregeneracy. Pharoah was a similar character, he never knew the Lord; and it is the unregenerate that will receive the damnation spoken of in *John*, 5, 29. Look over again at *Mat.* 23 and 32, and the context, see what description of characters our Saviour was describing. Your quotation from the 1 *Thes.* 2, 16, look that over again, and see if you can find any signs of life in the context. I think it is useless to quote a number of scriptures if they do not bear upon the purpose. Your argument was to convince me that the regenerate family of God might fall away and sin against the Holy Ghost, and you are bringing these scriptures which are all unregenerated characters, and after this you bring several scriptures one upon another without the least tendency to explain anything. Do you not think that more argument and less scripture would be preferable, and when you quote a scripture, clearly define the meaning of it, and make it bear upon the subject. For my part I always endeavour to take the stumbling block out of the way if I can; therefore I shall quote one of your quotations, and I will endeavour to define the meaning of it; and this text is one, I believe, is a great favourite with your people. How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation, *Heb.* 2, 3. In order to arrive at the meaning as clearly as possible, we ought very carefully to read and consider the first chapter; there Paul was very earnestly endeavouring to demonstrate to the Hebrews, the divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ. God who at sundry times and divers manners spoke in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his son. Now you see there is the *us*. St. Paul was a regenerated character, and he was writing to the christian church of the Hebrews, which were, or ought to have been regenerated characters, likewise therefore he makes use of the word *us*. He identifies them with himself. Keep this clearly in your mind, he was here proving the divinity of Christ from the Old Testament. Through the whole of this chapter he was giving them information and instruction; he was preaching the gospel to them, and in the last verse he says, "Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation." Then follows the exhortation, "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip; for if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward, how shall we escape if

we neglect so great salvation? What is this great salvation? Why it is the power of God displaying in the soul the riches of the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and giving the soul eyes to see that the Lord Jesus Christ is his salvation. What is it to neglect this great salvation? Why giving way to the temptations of the devil, being drawn away by the lusts of the flesh and many other temptations that we are subject to. Do you think Paul ever gave way to any of these temptations, for he was one included in the ~~wæ~~? I am perfectly persuaded he was the subject of temptations the same as any of the redeemed family, and the subject of sin, too, or he never would have confessed there was a law in his mind bringing him into captivity to the law of sin which is in his members, and this made him cry out, "O wretched man that I am." So you see neglecting this great salvation is committing sin, and backsliding after we become the recipients of this great salvation; and do you think we shallescape punishment for this sin and backsliding? Indeed, indeed, sin brings its own punishment. Those who have tasted the living waters know the death sin brings into the soul, and the agony of mind it occasions. The bastard may escape the rod, but the child of God never can; and that is what Paul means we cannot escape. Punished we must be for every transgression, and in this world too. But those who know not the Lord never knew what the punishment for sin is. Indeed I may safely assert they do not know what sin is, for it is not brought home to their conscience by the Spirit of God.

Dear George,—I have sent you another long letter. I began it with an idea that I had treated the subject in my former letter with too much severity, and I certainly felt a desire to remove any unpleasant impression you might receive; but when I began to write I felt myself carried forward, and I am fearful I have committed over again what it was my desire to palliate.

If you do not take it unkind, controversy is a source of information, and I may say instruction, but I think it seldom makes proselytes; at least I feel it would be impossible for all the argumentative powers in existence to remove the impression I have received in my soul from the all-powerful indwelling of the Spirit of God.

I may think erroneously on some subjects, but I cannot feel erroneously on this subject. Religion is a personal feeling. It is a powerful feeling of sin and misery which brings the soul in its feelings almost to distraction, and it is a glorious feeling of joy and peace in the soul which brings the soul sensibly and feelingly into communion with the Lord Jesus Christ, with a manifestation of the pardon of sin, and a sweet enjoyment of all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, *Eph. i.* And

this is not produced by creature merit and creature duties, but is the spontaneous free gift of the Lord Jesus, and comes by his most precious blood. It is not my wish for you to write a long letter at present, for I know you have not time, but if you at your leisure will enter into the subject again, I shall feel highly pleased, and I will endeavour to answer you to the best of my ability, with good temper and firmness. J. D.

REMARKS ON THE ABOVE.

The *aim* of our correspondent seems to be to prove that none but mere nominal professors can fall *finally* away; but it appears to us that in so doing he gives himself unnecessary trouble, and that by interweaving *unproved* and *untrue* propositions, by which he weakens his position and attempts to keep possession of *untenable* ground. He must, therefore, bear with us while we point out wherein he has encumbered his fortifications with *hinderances* to himself, and with *helps* to his enemy.

Fault the *first* is, in asserting that the word *apostate* is not found in the scriptures; now it is true the word itself is not in the English Bible, yet in the original we have the word *Apostasia*, five times; namely *Matt. v. 7, xix. 7; Mark, x. 4*. In all three of which it is in our version rendered *divorcement*, and very well reminds us of those who are nominally married to the truth, who soon become offended and put the truth from them; these are apostates. Again, *Acts, xxi. 21*, where it is rendered *forsake*. Here the Apostle was charged with teaching the Jews to apostatize from Moses. Again, *2 Thes. ii. 3*, where it is called *falling away*. These are apostates from the truth. Thus, then, the word *apostate* is found in scripture.

Fault the second, in the piece of our correspondent is, in denying that a *natural man may be a partaker of the Holy Ghost*. We, on the contrary, believe that a natural man *may* be a partaker of the Holy Ghost, and be *but* a *natural* man still; but we do not believe that a man can be a partaker of the Holy Ghost as a spirit of *life, pardon, and salvation*, and yet be either a mere natural man still, or in any danger of being finally lost. No; for the life brought into the soul by the Holy Ghost is *incorruptible* and *abideth* for ever. The pardon he seals is up to the day of eternal redemption, and the salvation which he brings nigh is everlasting.

And yet that there is a *sense* in which a man may be a partaker of the Holy Ghost, and be but a mere natural man still, is shewn in *Heb. vi.* (as also in other scriptures), for the Apostle there clearly distinguishes between these nominal professors who may become apostates, and those who were possessed of that faith and love which are inseparably connected with final salvation. Hence of those who were mere professors, he speaks in the *third* person; but of the real possessors in the *second* person. Thus, verse

the 4th, it is impossible for *those*, &c ; but verse the 9th thus, "but we are persuaded better things of *you*." *Those* and *you* are evidently two distinct classes. The nominals are liable to become *deadly* enemies to Christ, so as to persecute and crucify him in his *members*, and openly ridicule his heavenly truth, which is what our correspondent, while walking disorderly and sinfully in other respects, says he *could not do*, and thus it is that the just man falleth seven times and riseth up again ; but the wicked shall fall into mischief, and shall not be renewed to repentance.

In what *sense* then have such persons been partakers of the Holy Ghost? To which we answer, they have been partakers of the Holy Ghost in *several* senses ; but never partakers of his *grace*, but only of his *gifts*. Balaam had the *gift* though *not* the *GRACE* of prophesy. Saul had the *GIFT* of *reformation*, though not the grace of *regeneration* ; and the gift of reformation, made him join the prophets in singing psalms, called in our version prophesying, and was no doubt as happy as a stony ground hearer could be ; but ere long the Lord departed from him, and a spirit of jealousy of David's rising reputation was sent upon him, and this was a judgment, an evil spirit from the Lord.

Again, Judas had the *gift*, though *not* the *grace* of preaching, for he was, saith Peter (1 *Acts*, 17,) numbered with us, and *had obtained part of this ministry*, and thus it is if the Prince give a gift of his inheritance to one of his *servants*, then it shall be his to the year of liberty, after it shall *return* to the Prince, but the inheritance shall be his sons, *Ezek. xlii*, 17.

Now let us look again at *Heb.* 6, and we find five things said of these *nominal* christians. First,—That they were once *enlightened* ; and is it at all *uncommon* for men who are strangers to a broken spirit, *strangers* to a broken and contrite heart,—is it at all uncommon for such men to have in many respects great light in the scriptures, and by the scriptures to be morally and historically, and doctrinally enlightened ; and is there no sense in which such may taste of the heavenly gift of the Gospel dispensation. Are they all *real* christians that attend the ordinance of the Lord's supper? And may not the Holy Ghost bring into submission for a time to answer certain purposes, as he did Balaam, Saul, and Judas, and may they not like the stony ground hearer, be partakers of the Holy Ghost in the *testimony* of his word, and thus taste the good word of God, receive the word with joy, and thus be *for a time* governed by the powers of the world to come?

Now the Apostle does *not* say it is *impossible for these to fall away*. He does not say this. He says it is impossible to renew them again to repentance ; and if the Apostle were here speaking of those who shall never perish, and he wished to be understood as meaning the impossibility of their falling away and becoming

deadly enemies to Christ,—if this were his meaning, he would have said so ; but he does not say so. He does not say it is impossible for the persons of whom he is speaking to fall away, but rather shows that many of them do fall away ; but having no heavenly life, (for they were *not quickened*, but only enlightened.) They are given up to a reprobate mind, and therefore those reproofs and corrections which broke a Peter's heart, would harden Judas and send him away to hang himself.

But there were some of whom the Apostle was persuaded better things, namely, that they were partakers, not merely of the *gifts*, but of the *grace* of the Holy Ghost, and therefore would not fall away, but endure to the end.

The Apostle in the sixth of *Heb.* is remarkably *distinct* ; but in the 10th chapter, identifies himself *nominally* with professed christians generally, and leaves the distinction between the real and the mere nominal to speak for itself.

If *we* sin wilfully, &c., that is if we are of those who become wilful enemies, there will then remain nothing for us but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour us as adversaries. Thus then it appears to us that a mere natural man, though he receiveth not the *saving* things of the spirit of God, neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned ; yet that the mere natural man may be a partaker of the Holy Ghost in his mere temporary gifts.

As for the terms Holy Spirit and Holy Ghost, these are in the original the same. The word *Spirit* is from the *Latin* language, the word *Ghost* from the *Saxon*, and both mean the same thing, both answer to the Hebrew word *Ruach*, and to the Greek word *Pneuma* (Spirit.)

Fault the third of our correspondent is in calling the note by Mason a "tissue of falsehoods."

If Mr. Mason meant that this apostate professor had ever been a real christian, then his remarks would be out of place, but he appears to us to mean no such thing ; but that this apostate had acquired a *theoretical* knowledge of the truth, and had followed the truth as the stony ground hearers do for a time.

Such therefore have *theoretically* known the way of righteousness, and *seemed* for a time sincere in the same, but they were not truly sincere, there was in them neither conviction of sin, soul trouble, nor that experimental acquaintance with faith, judgment, and mercy, which is essential to vital and lasting sincerity ; these therefore apostatize, and their condemnation may be said to be fourfold.

First.—In Adam in common with all.

Second.—According to their personally morally wrong doing.

Thirdly.—As hypocrites in religion.

Fourthly,—As apostates from the way of righteousness, and

thus does a false profession double the condemnation of those who are given up to strong delusions.

But not only are these apostates, but thousands who hold out in a false profession to the end, and these have no bands in their death, their strength is firm. These *make sure* of a place in the kingdom of God, for, say they, "he that endureth to the end shall be saved." Such, not knowing that this is *not* a *conditional*, but a *distinctional* scripture, that is, it does not mean that every one who continues in his religion to the end shall be saved, for then Pagans, Mahometans, (Mahomet himself endured to the end,) and every other sect and system, however far from truth and vital godliness, would be saved. As this scripture cannot be understood in this broad sense, what then is its true meaning? is it not this :—That he who has a religion which *cannot* be rooted up, *cannot* wither or die, *cannot* be entirely conquered, and stands *inseparably* connected with eternal glory, that he who has *this* religion shall endure to the end; he shall hold on his way, and having clean hands shall wax stronger and stronger, he who has this vitality in him, this root of the matter, shall endure to the end; and he who in *this way*, the true way, endures to the end, the same shall be saved.

But to endure to the end in error, false doctrines, and a false religion, as thousands do, is to differ from apostates in this, that the sins of the apostate go *beforehand* unto judgment; but the sins of the one who endures to the end (in delusion), his sins follow after. The one is made manifest beforehand; the other is not, *Matt. vii. 22*, and so it is "that wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat," but how "strait is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."

We have thus freely stated wherein we differ from our correspondent; but we, nevertheless, are with him in the main scope and object of his letter. We are perfectly aware that the descriptions given in the word of truth of mere professors, that these are by thousands professing to be christians, taken for *true* disciples, and so they think they establish the doctrine of finally falling from grace; but it is one thing for a dog to return to his vomit, for a sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire; the one had given up his dainties, the other had been outwardly washed, but they are still vitally and essentially the same; for these merely reformed creatures to apostatize is one thing, but for a *sheep* to perish is another, as widely different as the character and destiny of Peter and Judas. Between us, then, and our correspondent there is no real collision of sentiment, mind, or purpose concerning the way of eternal life; but the matter being weighty, we could not resist the temptation to offer these few observations.—EDS.

THE GOSPEL AMBASSADOR;

OR,
Christian Pilgrim's Friend.

Blasphemy are the poor in Spirit, for their's is the kingdom of Heaven," Mat. v. 3.
"The Election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded," Rom. xi. 7.

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REIGNING GRACE.

MY DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD,—Grace be with thee and thine. I am now in Wolverhampton, a large town and in its vast crowd of faithy professors worshipping an unknown God, whilst a few peccadepised ones are worshipping him in the Spirit, and rejoicing in Christ Jesus, having no confidence in the flesh. How distinguishing is the grace of our Almighty God, it drops into the heart of here and there one, whilst in palpable darkness most men are left, and are a blind race; they run till death comes and drops them in the tomb. Out of this giddy and rebellious multitude, our great High Priest takes his tithe and prepares the same for the heavenly garner, and thither conveys it in his own good time. And what, my brother, shall we say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? And that God is decidedly for his church and people is as plain as ever was the sun at noon tide; and it is equally as plain that he hath justified his believing children from all things, from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses. But what seems to be the most astonishing of all is, that I should be included in the number of those who were ordained to eternal life. A sense of this does at times dissolve my heart in thankfulness and fills my eyes with tears, for I was as far gone as any one, and as low sunk as I well could be, and yet not in hell; and then to be raised from a condition so low and forlorn by an act of simple clemency, is what we don't hear of every day.

Grace—divine grace, ought to stand high in my esteem, for in taking me from where it found me at first, and placed me where I now am, it performed an exploit which but few of the human family know any thing about; and but just here and there one among professors of religion can understand the riddle. And thus am I a gasing-stock and a puzzle to men who as yet have

not gazed by faith on Christ the Son of God. But under all that may be thought, said, conjectured, and whispered about in a clandestine manner by the religious wise-aces of our day, I abjure thee, my soul, to be patient and watch the hand of God with thee, and thou shalt see mighty things on this side of the ocean, as thou hast seen on the other side to the surprise of many.

But, as observed before, I am now laboring among a despised, spiritual, loving, praying, affectionate, and a generous few, and to them my soul is nicely united, sweetly knit, for we are bound up together in the bundle of life. So, then, it stands with the Wolverhampton Christians and your friend. But still I hope not to forget you and the chosen few at Brighton. Indeed my heart is now with you all, for your God is my God, and your people shall be my people; and I long once more to be with you, and hope I shall be in June next, and I anticipate an abundance of gospel pleasure in my visit among you. And I know and am sure of realizing all of what I now have in anticipation, should the Lord come down upon us like rain upon the mown grass, and as showers that water the earth, as was the case in a good measure when I was with you last winter.

I am aware, and so are you, that all divine success in the ministry depends on the smiles of God, it is with him to bless or to withhold the blessings as seemeth good in his sight. All matters with us, both those which are for us, and those which are against us, are under the control of an immutable God; and hence if we are to be enlightened, strengthened, built up, encouraged, and comforted, the Comforter, even the spirit of truth which proceedeth from the Father, is sent to testify of Christ to us, and to bear witness with our spirits that we are the children of God. And so likewise, if our native evils bestir themselves very much, and our heart corruptions raised up thick and rush in upon us like a flood, and we are made to mourn and groan under the same, as we often are; the same Holy Spirit interferes for us in his own good time and checks them from doing any farther mischief to us. We of ourselves, brethren, cannot cope with our inbred corruptions to any good advantage; the Lord must raise up for us against these evil doers or else we shall be foiled and ruined at last. I found these things out many years ago, and hence all attempts made to suppress the abominable corruptions of the heart in our own strength, have to me appeared to be consummate folly.

By the will of God I shall pass a Sunday or two in your town. Pray for me, will you? and also that divine success may attend my ministry among you. By prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, we are to let our request be made known to God. And high is the privilege, and sweet the opportunity of drawing

near to a covenant God at a throne of grace. And then, to have the Holy Spirit to help our infirmities, and to make intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered; what an indulgence!

Sir, under all your fears and doubts, jealousies, and suspicions, I hope grace will be sufficient for thee. Grace divine, hath done wonders for the Lord's people, and it can do the same still, and I hope it will do wonders for thee and me. Without grace to help in every time of need, it would go ill with us. Some people can do without grace at all; and others again want a little of it just to help them out in cases of emergency: but our situation is such that we want grace all the time, and all the time want grace, and without it we should wither away and die without hope. Grace keeps the soul in good tune, buries all our faults, leads us to the slaughtered Lamb, comforts us when cast down, spreads light on our path, and makes all within us rejoice. We therefore will speak well of grace,—divine grace, let other people say whatever they please.

Men of our make and complexion cannot get along in the divine life without grace to any good advantage whatever; and hence remove grace from under us and we shall be as bad off as a house on sand when rain descends, floods come, and winds blow. In my estimation of spiritual things, divine grace is one of the very best companions I ever met with since I have known the Lord. It regulates all disturbed matters within in a nice manner, and puts down self and exalts Christ, and speaks good of his name. I am yours affectionately,

JAMES OSBOURN.

CAST DOWN, BUT NOT DESTROYED.

DEAR MESSRS. EDITORS,—I again take my pen to address a few lines, hoping you will not think me troublesome, as I find the Lord still blesses the labour of your hands in the publishing of the *Gospel Ambassador*, though it has many enemies to encounter; but it appears it has been and still is a blessing to many of the Lord's dear people, as a dear sister has lately told me it has proved so to her, and the Lord has been pleased to bring her through floods and flames of persecution and tribulation, to that great command of his (viz., believer's baptism); and we have reason also to say, is not this a brand plucked from the everlasting burnings? but he has promised to be a God to his people, and he hath not left himself without witnesses; he has said to some "Come out from amongst them (false professors), and I will receive you." We find the truth of the scripture verified where Christ said, "Ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake." As there are nine places of worship

within one mile and a half, besides one Quaker's Chapel, who all are haters of the true gospel, and wish the only one that is every where spoken against burnt down to the ground; but, blessed be his holy and precious name, he has delivered and will yet deliver; and the council of God shall stand throughout the countless ages of eternity, though our dear minister has been ready to say with the prophet Isaiah, "Who hath believed our report, and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?" but the Lord has given him seals to his ministry, and souls for his hire, in times that are past, and last Lord's-day five were baptized in his great name, who we hope and trust will be saved with an everlasting salvation; one is a brother of mine by nature, as I trust he is also by grace, which I have reason to be very thankful for.

We may say with Paul, "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, yet not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed." And it appears the Lord has in his own time answered the prayers of his people, as the deacons have thought "Well this sabbath will be the last," and the other, but they have not been destroyed yet; and we may say also this is Zion that no man careth for. But what a consolation to know and feel that our God careth for us, though we have been heavy laden with sins and transgressions, we have a blessed advocate with the Father, even Jesus Christ the Righteous, and he, I trust, has paid my mighty debt and made a way for the ransomed to pass through; and I can say at times I am one, though often like Newton,

"If I love, why am I thus,
Why this dull and earthly frame?
Hardly sure can they be worse,
Who have never heard his name."

I hope gospel ministers will recommend the work from the pulpit, as there are many who know nothing of such a work that would be glad to obtain it. But my object in writing to day is, will you oblige me and the Lord's people at large by giving your opinion upon *Isaiah*, 42. 21, "The Lord is well pleased for his righteousness sake, he will magnify the law and make it honourable." And I remain yours, in the bonds of everlasting love,

Two Waters, May 4, 1847.

A BRUISED REED.

BLESSINGS FOUND.

DEAR SIR,—The wise man has said, "Withhold not good from them to whom it is due." I am desirous of offering a few expressions of gratitude to you, as the Lord's ambassador to me, with some rich blessings, at a time of peculiar trial; the Lord having seen fit to cause me to walk in the path of tribulation,

more particularly for the last sixteen months, and having made the furnace a little hotter than usual, I began to think that he and had assuredly gone out against me, and not for me. At the commencement of one trial, some words from the epistle of James were repeatedly spoken to me, "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation." I strove hard to be obedient, and did as I thought endure pretty well; but before this was gone another came, a severe trial of faith and patience. I now began to faint and fell under it, and nothing but Jacob's plaintive words would do with me, "All these things are against me." I could not in any way cast my cares upon the Lord, and for some weeks bore it all myself alone, and seemed to forget and lose sight of the precious burden bearer of his people. I struggled, planned, and contrived in my own strength to extricate myself, but all in vain, which made my soul to drag on very heavily; indeed the Lord has dealt with me ever since I have known his precious name as he did with dear Newton—

"Crossed all the fair designs I schemed,
Blasted my gourd and laid me low."

During these feelings and circumstances I came for some few sabbaths to the Tabernacle to hear what God the Lord would speak to me there, and one morning I had heard with sweet approbation only, but in the evening the Lord was pleased to lead you to speak from *Isaiah, xl. 3 and 4*; from that blessed hour, from that precious Sermon, the stores of grace were opened and I was enabled to partake of them, was refreshed, strengthened and comforted, and I rose from the dark vale of fear, distrust, and unbelief to tread upon the high mountains of Israel; and although I had come a long distance, I now scarcely seemed to feel the ground I had to go, for light, love, joy, peace, faith and blessed confidence sprung up in my heart and soul, and my foot stood firm upon the rock of ages; and although I have been roughly tossed upon the billows since that blessed sermon, I have not sunk again into the same wretched state of mind I had previously, for the Lord immediately began to give me some very precious promises one after another, and I rested in sweet assurance that the Lord who had put me into the furnace would, at his own appointed time command me to come forth. You were indeed a spiritual Joseph opening up the stores, and I have fed upon the finest of the wheat.

I have now, dear Sir, another blessing to speak of, the Lord having inclined my heart to seek his face in very youthful days, indeed I think I may say, as far as I am able to form a judgment of myself, I believe his spirit to have been at work with me in the days of childhood; but when about sixteen years of age I heard a sermon from a text in Genesis, "For the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth," which made a very

deep impression on my mind, but pride and natural reserve of disposition made me determined to keep the workings of my mind as much to myself as I possibly could. About two years after I heard another sermon upon Law and Gospel, which impressed my mind even more than the other had done; I now began to seek the Lord with all my heart, with all my soul, and with all my strength; but although the true ministers of the gospel share a large portion of my spiritual affections, still from the dread of self deception I could not venture to say that either of these sermons was the means of my conversion, as I was the subject of much conflict at other times and from other circumstances; and as the Lord the Spirit opened my eyes to a knowledge of myself, and my love to the dear Redeemer increased, I became the subject of most distressing doubts and fear because I could not make out my calling with respect to day, week, or month, or any particular circumstance, as I knew many others were able to do, and I could not endure the thought of being one that had perhaps come over the wall instead of coming in by the gate at the head of the way, so this was a secret worm at the root of all my happiness for a very considerable time; but as the Lord the Spirit graciously opened my understanding under the preaching of the gospel, I became much more concerned to prove to myself whether I was a true subject of the regenerating grace of God or not, considering the time and way of its communication of less importance; and as I have since found the Lord has been graciously pleased at his own time and in his own way to solve many hard things for me, so I found in this, for one sabbath morning you made some very blessed, choice, and clear remarks upon the calling of Zacchæus,—my eyes were opened, and for the first time I saw very clearly how the Lord had called me, and it was a subject of high and delightful satisfaction to me. I cannot remember at the present moment the precise words to recite them, but no doubt, Sir, you will.

On the following sabbath I was much surprised, and very much grieved, to find from some remarks you then made that some person had been finding fault with you upon this very blessed part of the sermon, but the repetition of the subject re-kindled the glow of satisfaction I had previously felt, and I had a very strong desire to come and speak to you, but could not summons sufficient resolution to do so, as I have ever felt shy at entering the vestry. I spoke to the pew opener, and requested him to oblige me by presenting a few words for me, but he said, "Write a note;" I thought this best, and promised to do so; but, alas! the trouble I was in banished the intention at the time. I found when speaking to him on the subject that he too had had his heart cheered, and spoke with much warmth and satisfaction, and told me that he, like myself, had never been

able to make out his calling before. So, dear sir, if one found fault, two were blessed, and I doubt not many more,—a word fitly spoken.

Oh! how good it is; may he that liveth and was dead, and is alive for evermore, hold you as a star in his right hand, as one of the chosen ministers over a chosen people, unmoved and regardless of all that may oppose.

Having met with a new Christian friend some short time back, who told me she was in the habit of attending at Red Cross Street on a Friday evening to hear a Mr. Wells, I said, "I wonder if it is the same Mr. Wells that I have heard some time back." She said "It is;" so having heard of your fame, I, like the Queen of Sheba, resolved to come and see, and, like her, I too received some precious treasures, and had the happiness to find that a greater than Solomon reigned there.

May the Lord Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep, grant you as rich an increase of spirituality in your own soul, and the souls of your people; may they be your joy here below, and your crown of rejoicing in the world of grace and glory; and oh may I join with the ransomed hosts to sing my dear Redeemer's praise in my Father's house above,

"Where the assembly never breaks up
And sabbaths never end."

And when, dear sir, you shall be called to rest from your labours, and to bid farewell to all things here below, may the words of the Poet be fully applied to you—

"Soldier of Christ, well done,
Enter thy new employ,
And while eternal ages roll,
Rest in thy Saviour's joy"

Is the sincere prayer of
Harly Street, New Road,
March 26, 1847.

S W.

HEAVENLY TRUTH.

DEAR BROTHER,—If my soul were at liberty to tell you of the exalted views I at times have of the free, sovereign, electing, redeeming, discriminating love of God, manifested in his forbearance, continued loving-kindness, and displays of tender mercy towards one of the most mysterious of all sinners, I should be glad. I would willingly abase self, and exalt the Lord; but how little of his electing love and glory can we express. See how it secures our eternal happiness beyond the grave; but see also the unfolding of its glory and beauty in saving us in time from wrath to come, from the powers of hell, and from despair a thousand times; it also secures to us the embraces of God's

kindest acts, the manifestation of which breaks our hearts. And believe me, friend John, my heart is of that nature that nothing makes it bend and yield, submissive and resigned, but the goodness of God, that will accomplish it at once, bringing down all our thoughts into subjection to the mind of Jesus, reconciling us unto him. All this is secured and made known from the main source, election. Ah, my dear friend, I find a material difference betwixt my holding it as a doctrine revealed in God's word, and its holding me by a blessed power and influence in my soul, instead of being afraid to preach election. Oh, what a mercy that it is not afraid to acknowledge me wherever I am. I can, with brother John Warburton, and brother Paul, without hypocrisy say, "By the grace of God I am what I am." And by the grace of God freely bestowed I hope to arrive safe at last with the rest of the family to sing electing love, redeeming blood, and exalting and matchless grace.

My dear friend, living upon savoury meat, flowing from the ancient settlements of Jehovah, is truly delightful, though some say it leads to indolence. What an awful libel against the truth! If a rebel against the truth of God was to take his trial for such a false assertion as this before the great Judge and twelve jury-men, all Israelites who had tasted of those things, and lived in the enjoyment of them, they would to a man, without turning round to consider their verdict, acknowledge that the more they eat the humbler they lay and labour by faith in the Lord, by prayer to the Lord, before men and devils walk to honour the Lord, and with alacrity and delight run the race looking to Jesus; thus would they order the foreman Abraham to pronounce him guilty of high treason, yet to recommend him to mercy, for such were we, but we are washed because we were sanctified.

If it is the Lord's will, John, that you and I shall get to these mountains every day, and eat the fruit, we shall write a deal oftener one to another; it is so with the Lord and with us, and it is so with each other. When we have an epistle of love from God to our souls, there is always an answer back by return of post acknowledging the receipt of it, blessing him for his love in it, and praying for a repetition, begging of the Lord to let us hear again without delay. There is no laying of this fruit in our pockets, it must be eaten fresh, so I am sure of an answer to this soon, if the Lord warms your heart with his love. But I must draw to a close, with blessing the mercy, and praying for a continuance of it to you and your friends. I should dearly like to visit you for a week or two, and when the Lord opens a door I shall come without inviting. Friends here are pretty well; friend M—— and wife are pretty well in body, but still experiencing the way rugged and crooked, through much tribu-

Isaiah. The Lord sees he is of that nature apt to wax fat; so he keeps him well exercised, in order that he may walk about Zion to observe her walls, to count her towers, and to see her defences, which are strong beyond conception. When, at times he is set at ease after a sharp walk, he can talk of God's faithfulness, power, love, and mercy, and can rejoice in the defence of Zion, seeing all the perfections of Jehovah engaged for her safety.

W—— M—— and wife are tolerable; my wife is much as usual, very lame; they all join in love to you, your family, and your flock. May the Lord bless you with the enjoyment of what you preach, that you may honour him, and esteem each other.

Yours in love,

GEO. GRENHOUGH.

PERSECUTED, BUT NOT FORSAKEN; CAST DOWN, BUT NOT DESTROYED.

A man's word ought to be his bond. As I therefore did promise to give some account of the circumstance which produced the enquiry, "Did John doubt," &c. I have started with a few remarks on doubting and fearing; if you think them worth a place in the *Ambassador*, send them forth, if not, make such use of them as seemeth good unto you.

Messrs. Barrows;—Your remarks on the above is to me in accordance with the word of God, and by an experimental knowledge of the same, I can put my amen to it; but for my maintaining my standing on such premises, with a few other matters, as doubting and fearing, I have been consigned to the regions of death, but blessed be the Lord, I am yet alive, and have a good hope, through grace, believing that he who hath begun the good work will carry it on; and that he will carry me on, and bring me through all I have to encounter here on earth, until all which the Lord hath appointed for me be accomplished, and then to arise by the Spirit of God and enter into that eternal rest, where I shall see him who was my guide and guard on earth—see him who by his own precious blood hath redeemed me unto God—see him who when on earth, bore the contradictions of sinners against himself, while he bore the sins of all his people—and see him as the Lamb on the throne of God—and unto him ascribe salvation, glory, honour, and power, for evermore.

Now, together with the above, I have said and still maintain that the children of God do obtain blessings in a negative form or way. Although I have been opposed in this matter, and have been told positively they do not, yet withal this I do here maintain my standing, because I have had blessings brought home to my soul in that way. Now while no man can persuade

me I am not one of the Lord's family, yet sometimes when I have been pondering over my state as a sinner in the sight of God, I have sunk into doubts and fears concerning the matter, I have then began to look round about and to summons up all that I have gone through, and after all there appears to be a veil cast over the whole ; then I turn and look within, then such thoughts as these have been brought to my mind, well, if I am not one of the Lord's children, I must be in the world. Then the inquiry is, how stands my heart affected in this, where is its fixation? the Lord hath said "where the heart is, there your treasure is also;" now, here I come to a positive standing, and can say before a heart searching God, my heart is not in the world, although I have to mourn on account of that worldly spirit within. But finding my heart is not in the world I am brought to this conclusion, well, it must then be in heaven ; and from whence I look for the Saviour, not in self, not in the world, nor in any thing I can do. Thus I am brought again into a positive standing in the salvation of God, so I came into two positives through a negative position, not in the world, then I must be in the church.

But I have been told that we may be out of the world and not in the church ; this is a strange doctrine to me, I read but of two states in the word of God, the wicked and the righteous, the elect and non-elect, the church of God, the synagogue of Satan ; also I have been condemned for maintaining that doubting and fearing is an evidence of life in the soul ; when I say doubts and fears, I do not mean those of an infidel, or a nominal professor, who doubts the Christ of God or the salvation of God, but I mean a soul that is doubting and fearing lest after all they are not one of the Lord's children. This I maintain under this consideration, and I will speak of it as it has been brought home to my soul's comfort ; first, if Christ was not precious to my soul, why should I be in doubt about the matter? for who ever doubted and feared about obtaining that which was of no value to them. In the next place, it is an evidence that the life of God is in the soul because there is nothing in man by nature that will ever draw out the heart and soul unto God ; man by nature has no more desire than the devil himself after salvation through the blood and righteousness of the Son of God. Again, I was never brought into a doubting and fearing state but that there was a crying unto the Lord for a manifestation of his presence to my soul ; and this is hungering and thirsting after righteousness ; then blessed is that soul.

I can look back and see the time when I had no thoughts of God, and knew not what sin was—had not the fear of God before my eyes—had no conception of heaven or hell, they both were on a level with me—neither dreaded the one, nor desired

the other. While in this state, I had no doubts nor fears about my soul's state in the sight of God, but when the word was brought home to my heart with power, it separated me from the world—brought me to feel what a sinner I was, and made me cry unto the Lord for mercy, then doubts and fears began to rise, and the prayer of the publican went forth unto the Lord "God be merciful to me a sinner." And blessed be the Lord, he has oftentimes heard my cry, and sent his word with power to my soul, and made me rejoice in the God of my salvation.

Thus I have given a brief account of the circumstances which produced the enquiry, also the reasons why I maintain my standing on such premises, and leaving the matter in the hands of him who judgeth rightly, and divideth to every man his portion; if I err in the matter here stated, I pray the Lord to set me right. But I am at present fully persuaded I do not err in this matter. May the Lord preserve us from mistaken notions in religion, that we may not take pride for humility, presumption for faith, a persecuting spirit for gospel zeal.

Kingston.

D. H.

THE SAVOUR OF CHRIST.

DEAR MESSRS EDITORS,—I am glad that the dear Lord has disposed your mind so as to continue the publication of the *Gospel Ambassador*, and may the dear Lord make it still a greater blessing to the souls of his dear children. I know that it has been blest for years past, so that the name of Jesus, through it, has been as ointment poured forth; and I have always found that when any work or any dear minister of God has been blest to my soul, I put a value upon it as instrumental means in the hands of a covenant God. Dear Sirs, when we find a little "savour of this good ointment," how it doth revive and comfort our poor wounded conscience, *Eant.* i. 3, the name of Jesus is as ointment poured forth. I would desire to speak of those good ointments in a spiritual point of view; and the first of them, I think, is God's eternal predestination, election, love, and mercy, manifested to a poor sinner: Oh what a good "ointment" is this to one who has been in fear and darkness of mind, and tempted by the devil that he has neither part nor lot in the love of God, and that he is a reprobate, that he is not elected. Sometimes the devil tells me there is no God, no heaven, no hereafter. Oh what power that enemy has at times on the mind of a child of God. But when we find the "savour of this good ointment," the devil is put to the rout, and all is well. Another of those "good ointments," is redeeming love. O what a love is this. When we are led to consider the sufferings, the agonies, the death of the Lamb of God, and what he endured, what sorrow of body and soul he bore when in the gar-

den of Gethsemane, sweating great drops of blood falling down to the ground; and sometimes I am not without a hope of my intercession in this redeeming love, then his name is as "ointment poured forth." This redeeming love is not universal, neither is it Christ and God, not all the free-willers in the world have ever done or ever will do, one iota of the work of redemption, "he by his own offering has perfected for ever them that are sanctified." This redeeming love is of such a kind, that it rejoices the hearts of God's family upon earth; at times it is the glory of the church above, it is the glory of angels, yes, and devils are in malice against it. But none will prize this redeeming love till they feel themselves lost; then it will be good "ointment!" indeed. When this savour perfumed in my heart, it was the best I ever found before. What a mercy "love's redeeming work is done." But notwithstanding all the predictions by the holy prophets of the sufferings of Christ in his redeeming love, notwithstanding all that Christ went through in his agony, all that he endured at Pilate's bar, all that he suffered on the cross at Calvary, all the wonderful events that took place at his death, the sun hid his face, the temple rent in twain, the graves were opened, the dead came forth, the rocks rent, the earth did quake, *Mark. xvi. 61, 62*; notwithstanding all this, yet blind guides go about and say, salvation's work is conditional, they talk as though redeeming work was always going on; but our dear Redeemer said it was "finished, and bowed his head, and gave up the ghost." What a sweet savour doth the ointment of Jehovah's preserving grace send forth to a poor tried child of God, that is taught his own weakness, his helplessness, and poverty from day to day; what enemies from without and from within he has to encounter; they are said to be "preserved in Christ Jesus, and called." Sometimes I am led to look back at God's preserving mercy to me during the days of my ignorance; oh what a monster of iniquity, what a rebel, before, I hope, God called me by his grace. But when I consider the many preserving mercies that I have experienced since that time, truly his "name is as ointment poured forth;" therefore the regenerated love him.

Another of these good ointments is free justification through Christ, perfect obedience to the Law, demand.

All God's family were justified in the eternal purposes of heaven before time began, and they are all "justified by faith, and so we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

It is through this holy doctrine that a poor sinner, as black as the tents of Kedar, stands as perfect and free from all sin, from all charges of the law, as though they had never committed one sin. This ointment sends forth a sweet savour at times, O how healing it is to a poor wounded conscience.

Another of these good ointments, is the righteousness of Christ. What a mercy that a poor naked sinner is clothed with this garment of salvation to hide all his "pollution from view." This is the wedding garment that grants the poor soul an admittance into the kingdom of heaven; this is the fine linen, this is the needle work;" were it not for this robe, there is not one soul but would appear naked at that solemn day. I trust the language of my heart is with the poet—

"May my soul be found in him,
And of his righteousness partake."

Then will this ointment send forth at times a sweet savour; but not to the self-righteous, it won't do for them; it is to the poor soul who sees his own righteousness to be as filthy rags.

The free mercy of God as manifested through the Lord Jesus Christ, is another "good ointment," which causes the name of Jesus to be as ointment poured fourth. This is the glory of thousands in heaven and the glory of thousands on earth, and will be their glory for ever and ever. This ointment sends forth such a sweet savour to a poor sin-distressed soul, as to rejoice his very heart; at times I am ready to say, "What could such a poor vile sinner as I feel myself to be, do without this good ointment of Jehovah's mercy?"

"Without his free mercy I could not live here,
Sin soon would reduce me to utter despair."

But he has proclaimed his "name merciful, long-suffering;" it is said that the mercy of the Lord reaches to the very heavens, and the longer I live the more do I feel my need of this mercy to be manifested towards me, the vilest of sinners.

There are two classes of people that do not feel their need of this mercy; the one is a sinner dead in sin, the other is a self-righteous Pharisee.

"But mercy is joyful news indeed
To malefactors doomed to die."

Dear Sirs,—I have written these few lines as I felt my mind impressed, and must now leave them to the Lord's blessing and your consideration; and if you think them at all consistent with truth, please to insert them; and may the dear Lord bless them to his dear family. I remain, yours sincerely,

Near Trowbridge, Wilts.

A LOVER OF TRUTH.

LETTER TO MR. Warburton.

DEAR BROTHER Warburton,—The dealings of God with his people are some of the great mysteries which the world is ignorant of. Indeed, John, the circumstances which I have had

to pass through have been very trying, and my flight has been in winter, my soul experienced very heavy conflict, fighting with second causes, till I was such a ragged creature I durst not go to God, and carried away with this foolish and dreadful operation that I would have the *battle* out, and then I would wash me in my own preparations, warm me by my own obedience, and make myself as decent as possible to go to God for mercy; but, ah, my dear friend, it is all a cheat, for there is no cessation from these conflicts, only as we are led to view the sovereign, discriminating love of God, and feel its power in our souls, bringing us down with all our lofty looks to be glad that we are not in hell, and then to see God's goodness pass before us, makes us hate ourselves and love him. But there are very useful lessons to be learned in these winter seasons. We see that the word of God is replete with instruction, and with truth, and God will have us in different seasons to teach us different parts of his word. In the winter we are taught that the faithfulness of God is an invaluable perfection, and taught the absolute necessity of salvation, and salvation too being all of grace, and taught to eat the truth as high seasoned with God's immutable, electing love, as ever it can be made, for in these northern parts there is no nourishment in any thing that can either be altered with cold or heat; and, bless God, though election may have given a man the heartburn in his burn, yet now it is the only thing in the world that can cure him, and make him temperate within, it keeps down all inflammations, cures all frost-bitten, heals, and makes a man leap like an hart. Any kind of food without this precious truth, either produces inflammation or causes shivering fits to come on, and these are unpleasant things to be exercised with, and whoever says that this doctrine of election is not full of marrow, it is plain they have never eaten it. It is the spring of all my hopes, the boast of my soul, the support of my longest of nights, the cause of all my revivings, and the very source of all my joy.

In winter we have union of soul with the cases of the saints of God in his word, and to feel for them as brethren to know what Jonah meant when he said, "Out of the belly of hell cried I unto God," and to look by faith from thence towards his holy temple; to know what David meant when he cried for salvation, and said, "The waters were got into his soul;" i.e., trouble had laid hold of him, and he saw sin in its real sinfulness. Here we learn that there is an amazing difference between us laying hold of trouble, and trouble laying hold of us. We here are taught that all divine breathings for deliverances, that all our groanings and pains that we feel on account of our state before God, is the effect of divine operation in our conscience; God teaches his people to enter into the SPIRIT of

truth by bringing them into these states, and to know what David knew when he thus prayed, "Take not thy Holy Spirit from me, restore unto me the joys of thy salvation."

But, John, what a fitness we see here in a free salvation, it must be free or we must never have another enjoyment of it; here we prove both the freedom of divine operation, and the power of it. Indeed, John, after a summer's visit we frequently need a winter's blast, for we are such forgetful creatures. But, my dear friend, the frost has been so severe with me, that my pens and ink have been frozen fast when I would have wrote to a friend, and sometimes when the Lord has passed by me in loving-kindness, I see it is a right way and would not have missed one step of it for any thing, for wisdom seems to have marked it out so well, that God is both seen and acknowledged in it. Oh, man, there are no such fools in the world as God's people; Jesus Christ might well say that "the children of this world are wiser in their day and generation, than the children of light," for if we are led to consider our high calling, our certain inheritance, and the rich relation we have, *oh, for shame* let us hide our faces to think we should be such fools! How should we swell if we were related to some duke or lord, especially if he were our brother; or countess, such an one for our sister. Why our rich relations would be introduced on all occasions; we might find a gratification in talking about them, but what paltry stuff, and how our folly appears in some of our long winter nights. Where is our inheritance? That is ever sure in Christ. Where is our rich brother? He so loved us as to give himself for us, he is made of God unto us every thing that we need. Alas! now he has withdrawn himself, but he will appear again, and every fresh glance of his person and worth makes us love him more and more. But we think sometimes he might stay longer than what he does; but no, he has a work to perform in our consciences, and he sends us again into the wilderness, then gives us another display of his divine character, but we are such blockheads that the Lord is obliged to put us back again into the reading made easy, for sometimes God's people, after a divine lesson of his loving-kindness, think they are got now into the higher classes amongst the Latin scholars, and they are asking hard questions; and, by the by, they do not want an answer, but rather tremble lest a classical scholar should be there to give them one, for they want to prove that they have been at college. Ah, John, to come into the lower classes again is very cutting, but no matter for that now, God will have it so, "For he that believes shall not make haste;" he must understand these things, or he must be put back until he does. But what a wonderful God we have, he always makes us love him, and

thank him for discovering our folly and teaching us wisdom by every foolish trick we play.

May God often take you to the Cape of Good Hope, and lead you to the river of life, and give you to drink of its sovereign streams, is the prayer of your old friend,
Manchester, Sept. 18, 1815.

G. G.

EDITORS' REVIEWS.

Hell and Heaven alike eternal, a Sermon, by the Rev. J. H. Evans, M. A., preached in John Street Chapel, King's Road, Bedford Row, London, on Sunday morning, December 20, 1846.

"These shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal," *Matt. xxv. 46.*

The main object of this sermon is to shew that the punishment of the lost is endless. Mr. Evans rests his argument chiefly upon the punishment of the lost being set in parallel position with the happiness of the saints, and with the duration of the glory of God. Mr. Evans has accomplished in the eyes of those who see with him his easy task, but we do not think this sermon so strikingly well adapted to meet objections, as are other of his productions upon other subjects.

The doctrine of Annihilation, like other heresies, is suffered to come abroad, no doubt, to make manifest the hearts of men, and also to try the children of God. And as Mr. Evans well observes, "*Earthquakes are suddenly seen, but not suddenly produced,*" there is in the hearts of mere professors an *under* current of unbelief; and when some heresy suited to their real character is thrown in their way, they will fall in with it, and even some of them of understanding may fall to try them, to purify them, and to make them white.

But it is not our intention at present to enter into this controversy, hoping to have some better opportunity so to do. Mr. Evans is a man of fine mind, great talent, and defends with much clearness and force the outworks of Christianity. This seems to be his place, a position, as it were, between servants and sons, between the bond-children and the free, between those who are born after the flesh and those who are born of the Spirit, a sort of vacillating position between free-agency and free grace, so that it is not easy to say to which people such men belong, whether to those whose religion is from natural conscience, from education, and from the letter of the Bible, or to those whose religion is from above, wrought in them, maintained in them and they in that, by the power of God.

There is in the sermon now under review no want of talent,

gravity, or solemnity; he proceeds in a very orderly, serious, and becoming manner, with admirable humility and superior sense, such as to command respect. The wicked going away into everlasting punishment, going away from all their vain ceremonies, empty forms, and dear delights, is set forth in dark and appalling colours; and the degraded associations into which they come, set before them in an imposing form.

Further, Mr. Evans says, "he has nothing in common with those persons who love to revel in such a subject as this;" he sees and feels that the final misery of man as seen in the light of the righteous judgment of God, is a matter deep and dreadful beyond all conception. The sermon while sounding from the pulpit no doubt kept up a very serious and silent attention, and yet though possessed of all these advantages, this sermon contains hardly any thing in vital matters clear or decisive; here is plenty of awfulness and terror, but no *definition* of the way of escape—no opening up of the strait and narrow way that leadeth unto life—no description of the feelings, and fears, and desires, and conflicts, and apprehensions of a soul born and taught of God; here, in this part of the matter Mr. Evans shews either a woeful blindness to spiritual things, or a sad negligence, that, after bringing the creature under all the thunder-bolts of heaven, to leave him there, instead of taking him by the hand and step by step tracing out the way of escape.

It is true Mr. Evans says something about going to Christ, but it is in that general vague and loose way, that no one could from his directions know which way to go, nor what kind of salvation is needed, nor how it is obtained, nor whether it is certain, or uncertain, conditional, or unconditional. We do not say that if we come to this sermon and ask for bread, it will give us a stone, or that if we ask for fish, it will give us a serpent, or that if we ask for an egg, it will give us a scorpion, but if it do not minister these evil things to us, so neither does it minister good things to us; we may be in prison, but it comes not to us, we may be sick, hungry, thirsty, naked, and strangers and pilgrims on the earth, but this sermon does not make itself a friend or companion to us, but leaves us to want and die; we are left without knowing whether salvation be of God or of man.

Terrors, awfulness, argument, intellect, we have in abundance, and towards the end of the sermon a part of the fifth chapter of Matthew, quoted to shew and set forth the happiness of the righteous, but no opening up of what the righteous are.

We do not, therefore, much wonder that a person who had suffered, when in soul trouble, many things under the bewildering yea and nay ministry of Mr. Evans, should, after being brought to know the Lord for herself in an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure, and which was all her salvation and

all her desire,—we do not wonder that this person having escaped such a task master, and became united in holy liberty to him who is meek and lowly in heart, and gave rest unto her soul, and taught her the way of peace and plenty, and that his grace had infinitely outbounded all her sins, that his mercy from everlasting to everlasting embraced her,—no wonder that such an one when thus set free should when on a dying bed, *nobly refuse* to see this Physician of whom she “had suffered so many things.” “We speak that we do know,” and are (if need be) prepared to give name, and time, and place.

But a blind *jumble* of things is what is most suited, not to those who dwell in that city which is compact together, but on the borders of another city whose ancient and mystic name is Babylon; and lest it be thought that we are too severe in our remarks, Mr. Evans shall speak for himself,—

“If a man turns his back on the way of peace, what wonder is it, if he finds the path of hopeless misery? He reaps as he has sown. If a man hardens his heart against conviction, what wonder is it, if at the last he is hard as the nether millstone? If a man listens to the entreaties, the arguments, the appeals, and marks the tears of his friends, and yet cares for none of them, what wonder is it, if at the last he has no friends? There are no friends in hell; all are enemies there.”

What are we to infer from this? would not every hypocrite and carnal mind respond to it, is it not confirming the deluded in their delusion, and leading them on to suppose they can keep themselves, and turn to God and accept the mercy of God and be saved when they please.

He asks his hearers if they, any of them, are veering towards destruction; he advises them “not to venture into the current, for that they will be carried along as straws.” Why, sir, what do you mean? are men to be spoken to as though they were *not* already in a lost condition, as though their iniquities like the wind had *not* carried them away, as though they were *not* already gone out of the way, as though they were *not* already become unprofitable; are they to be spoken to as though some little effort of nature’s withered arm could bring them to God. Oh, man, who art thou that deludest others, deludest thou not thyself also? Some say they believe he is a living man, that he has life in the soul, only he is still bound up so much in the religion of the flesh. Well, such men may be real Christians, but such by no means stand manifest to our conscience as ministers of God; and however amiable may be the *personal outward* fruits of such, their *ministerial* fruits are anything in the greater part of their ministry, but such as suit those who are hungering and seeking after the chief things of the ancient mountains, and precious things of the lasting hills.

The evils of such a ministry stand thus:—

First. It deludes the souls of men by presenting to them a

false account of their state before God as sinners ; it does not open up and shew the *root* of bitterness which has been and is their ruin, nor does it scripturally describe the work of the Holy Spirit, nor the peculiar marks and evidences thereof, but sets men down for Christians who are not born of God, nor made acquainted experimentally either with the evil of sin, as seen in the light of the majesty of God, or as interwoven with nature ; nor are such experimentally acquainted with the salvation of God, the counsels of his will, nor the amplitudes of his mercy ; the secret of the Lord is not with such, he hath not shewn them his covenant, such can neither weep nor rejoice with the real saints of God, and the more such a ministry is glossed over with the letter of scripture, and attended with great gravity, and fleshly sanctity, and *natural* seriousness, so much the more is it suited for its work of deception ; the devil himself being transformed into an angel of light, and so deceives his thousands and tens of thousands, and would, if it were possible, deceive the very elect.

Secondly. Not only does such a ministry delude the souls of men in general, but it keeps the children of God, who at the first fall under such a ministry, in legal, carnal, and miserable bondage, builds them up in enmity against vital godliness, leading them to make light of the sovereignty of God, and even to speak (in ignorance) disparagingly of the doctrines of sure and everlasting mercy, so that such ministers enter not into the liberty of the sons of God themselves, and they hinder those that are entering. But there is a set time to favour Zion, and the Lord will *starve* his children out of every false refuge, and bring them to seek and enjoy the very truths they have been cautioned against.

Our mode of dealing with such a ministry is this,

We state our reasons for rejecting it, we come out from it to be separate, and touch not, taste not, and follow not their crooked paths ; as to the ministers we leave them ; as to who among them may belong to the Lord, and who may not, we leave with him who is judge of all, and knoweth them that are his.

And if they are not sons they are at least servants, and we view such in the same light as we do the bulk of the missionaries, used and overruled by the hand of providence to instrumentally work out his "great designs." We should hope that providence is using the missionaries to prepare the way for some great event, they are carrying the *letter* of the Bible to the ends of the earth, and we hope the Spirit of it will by and by follow as it did in days of old, when the Jews had carried the letter of scripture over the Eastern World, and over the Roman Empire ; and when the holy Spirit shall be poured out, then those who were first to carry the *letter* of the Bible to the hea-

then, will be most likely (like the Jews of old) be the first to oppose the spirit of the Bible; they are, therefore we hope, in the order of *providence* doing a great preparatory work, the *grace* of it is yet to come.

Many complain because the missionaries ask for so much money, and people from motives of covetousness will often speak disrespectfully, and even contemptuously of the missionaries. But the work of the missionaries is a temporal, providential matter, and money answereth all things to a certain extent in these matters. What can we expect? we cannot expect mere natural men to do a spiritual work, they are doing all that natural men can do, and we hope that among both the missionaries and yea and nay ministers, some of them may be alive from the dead, but at present hidden under much rubbish.

And when the Lord has a great spiritual work to do, he will raise up spiritual labourers, who shall plough and sow, and plant, and build, and enter into all the joy of their Lord.

Mr. Evans, whose ministry we have just glanced at, seems neither to plough deep nor straight, nor to sow with unmingled seed, nor to plant in the right place, nor to build with the right materials, nor to bring royal dainties upon the table for the royal family; but though he is very awkward, not to say dangerous in these departments, so as not to be of any use on the farm, or in the house, he may nevertheless do to muddle about and do a little hedging and ditching between the farm and the common.

Ens.

A Plain Statement; followed by a Few Reflections upon Mr. Philpot, of Stamford, as a Christian, a Preacher, and a Reviewer.
By W. Palmer, Chatteris. London: Arthur Hall and Co., Paternoster Row; Higham, Chiswell Street; and all Booksellers.

We had intended to enter somewhat fully into this matter of dispute between Mr. Palmer and Mr. Philpot, but there are two considerations which have altered our minds.

One is, that it would occupy forty or fifty pages to say all we have to say.

The other is, that bringing forward the faults and defects of good men, tends rather to give advantage to the enemy than not.

We do not by this mean that there are not cases where good men are to be withstood and rebuked, that they may be sound in the faith.

Mr. Palmer sent out a book without his name to it proposing to form a missionary association; this book was reviewed in the *Standard*, in October 1841, in which review both book and author are condemned and consigned over to Satan. This of course could not be very pleasant to Mr. Palmer.

Some of Mr. Philpot's friends at Chatteris, it seems, requested

the use of Mr. Palmer's pulpit for Mr. Philpot, which Mr. Palmer was willing to grant, if Mr. Philpot would acknowledge that he had been too censorious in his review of Mr. Palmer's book. Mr. Palmer sent a note to Mr. Philpot to this effect. Mr. Philpot replied, "*That he saw no reason, nor felt any inclination to revoke or modify the sentiments therein declared, wholly or in part.*" Mr. Palmer having this reply, very naturally refuses Mr. Philpot his pulpit, and sets to with shining talent and gigantic powers of language to pull Mr. Philpot to pieces, as a Christian, as a preacher, and as a writer; and many things which Mr. Palmer has said of Mr. Philpot's ministry are certainly not far off from the truth; but still Mr. Palmer is, in our estimation, much the more faulty of the two.

Mr. Palmer's work, reviewed by the *Standard*, certainly was couched in such language, that no one taught of God would or could suppose the writer of that book to be any thing but a dead, yet highly intellectual, pompous, frothy professor. Had it fell to our lot to have reviewed that book, and we had known nothing, as it is clear the Editors of the *Standard* did not, of who was the author, we certainly should have treated it as the *Standard* has done; we should have cast it to the moles and to the bats, and even now, were it not for the private information we have received in conversation with a minister, on whose judgment we can rely, but for this we should, even now we have read this book of animadversion upon Mr. Philpot, think but very little *spiritually* of Mr. Palmer.

Is it not then a pity that while Mr. Palmer is convinced of his state as a sinner, brought to the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness, led into the love and grace of eternal election, made acquainted with the everlasting covenant, engaged and led on by the power of the Holy Ghost in a daily conflict with sin, temptation, and tribulation, seeing and feeling that it is of the Lord's mercies that he is not consumed, and that all his springs are in God, and that those springs flow and ebb at heaven's command, that the flesh profiteth nothing, that even a Paul may plant and Apollos water, yet it is God alone that can give the increase—is it not, we say, a pity (supposing Mr. Palmer to be a possessor of grace) that Mr. Palmer's zeal to do good should carry him away into language, which must, as to his meaning, mislead people in their judgment concerning him? does he not then throw impediments in his own way, and drive from him those who are simply and sincerely seeking the mercy, the salvation and presence of God; seeking grace whereby they may go on to serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.

Mr. Palmer's industry, proved by the greatness of his natural requirments, does him very great credit, and stands in quite a prominent contrast to the repulsive laziness, disgusting igno-

rance, and *low cunning* of some so called gospel ministers, who go on bawling about hardly any thing but the devil and their heart, except now and then a senseless anecdote or a little piece of *mendicant craft* concerning their wonderful worldly troubles.

These seem to us to preach as though they were a sort of *text hunters*, taking up a great part of their time in telling the people what a breathless race they have had to catch a text, and when at last they have run it down, they make no use of it; one is almost tempted to think that Solomon alluded to such when he said, "the slothful man roasteth *not* that which he took in hunting."

When a full and beautiful text is brought before us, we expect to be fed from it. But no, the old leaven, mouldy and dry, is again brought before us, and there are some morbid vitiated appetites that love to have it so.

But Mr. Palmer's fault as a minister lies not in this direction, he errs in another way, he makes his great natural ability very prominent, and clothes his thoughts in language the most splendid, and dwells at times very philosophically upon the works of God, upon worldly sciences and learning; and who can say that in so doing what *mischief* he does himself; all drapery of language and philosophy should be left to those who have nothing better in possession; we tremble when we see those acquirements, so *useful in their place*, become a temptation and a snare to a man. Oh, how paltry, how childish, how greivous their display, when they are taking the place of the *weighty matters* of the law of truth, faith, judgment, and mercy; these are matters to be dealt with in the simplest and plainest language possible, for so much as the Creator surpasseth the creature, by so much do the blessings and glories of the gospel surpass all creature acquirements, and to set the simplicity of the gospel aside to make a display of a little acquired intellect, or even to use the gospel as a means of making that display, is a most awful and dangerous error to fall into. We repeat, how paltry, oh, how paltry are such things in comparison of the salvation of a never dying soul.

The two main things in which we complain of Mr. Palmer are, the legal, not to say the popish, tone in which his book, reviewed by the *Standard* in 1841 was written; the other is, in preaching at times so much in the language and pomposity of a sort of religious philosophy. How can he expect those who are seeking the bread of life to be content with husks, for whatever the learning and acquirements of the creature may be, and however useful in their place, yet after all there is nothing that can truly profit the soul but that which is of God, it must come through a broken heart and a contrite spirit, and through trials, deliverances and communion with God. Whatever comes not in this way, will end where it began, namely, in the flesh.

Mr. Philpot, though a learned man and makes considerable display of his learning, as is seen in the redundancy of imagery and intellectual ingenuity running through both his writings and his preachings, yet his language is plain, simple, chaste, clear, and powerful, nor could he, but for his learning, either preach or write as he does; it is to a naturally vigorous mind, and to his education, that he is indebted for that *natural* ability with which he expresses himself. Yet while we thus speak we think no one can accuse him of *seeking* to be admired for his learning, and especially as it is in his power to display very much more learning than he does. We have for years looked with suspicion upon seceders, very, very few of them prove to be good for any thing; it has, by some, been remarked that very few who leave dissent and go into the Church of England, are much credit to the church, and that very few who leave the church are much credit to dissent. This witness is true. But we have some honourable exceptions.

We looked for a long time with great suspicion upon Mr. Philpot: we saw him putting men down, such as Dr. Hawker, as also the late Mr. Nunn, of Manchester, and cutting off others, and pronouncing others to be Christians—stars of the first magnitude, who were nothing all the time but snarling and vicious hypocrites. We saw tremendous experiences insisted upon, which we nowhere meet with among men, not one have we found to come fully up to some of the descriptions that have been given. We have met with plenty of *pretenders*, and if *abusing* others, and pronouncing *others* dead letter men, Antinomians, heady, high-minded, natural professors, if a great experience consist in thus foaming out their own shame, then certainly there is no deficiency whatever.

We saw these things going on, and we saw many setting up the blind tendencies of fallen nature, for the operations of the Holy Spirit, and this is a state of things still pushed forward by the "*humble imitators*" of great men.

But has Mr. Philpot more experience of things now than he had? Yes, he has; and while he, perhaps, thought we dissenters needed a little putting to rights, he has found out that he himself also had some few things to learn, and he has in part learned them. We saw, some time ago, an onward step in the right direction in his ministry, our suspicions were allayed, we rejoiced to see his ministry progress towards that which would feed the lambs and sheep of Christ, instead of creating dogmatical pretenders to a great experience, and not *one particle* of it ever felt by them; while the real *sincere* gleaner, because he had so little, was afraid to say he had any.

Not that Mr. Philpot's ministry even now embraces quite enough for us of what we have in *hope*; we would not have him

leave out any part of what we have in *hand*, for this would be to leave that out that which divides the living from the dead; but as we have such abundance in hope, compared with the little we have in hand, and as we are *saved by hope*, a sight of the promised land does our hearts very much good, and "fires our zeal along the road."

Mr. Philpot has a great natural suspiciousness about him; this seems natural to him, he can hardly at times believe any one sincere either to him or to any thing else; he has a mode of calling almost every thing in question, and this peculiar turn of mind leads people sometimes to think that he has some lurking ill feeling at the bottom, and when he has been cutting up a mere natural dead profession of the doctrines of grace, some have thought that he was hitting at the doctrines themselves, and they have thought themselves confirmed in this opinion by marking how sparingly he deals in the doctrines. But we think these suspicions are wearing away; Mr. Philpot's services are accepted of the saints, and he is an useful minister of the New Testament.

We did intend the rod lightly for him, but when we look through the land and see how few true, and faithful, and useful ministers there are, our hearts fail us when we attempt to notice the defects and blemishes of a minister, whom, after all, we trust will be enabled to go on to prove himself a workman that need not be ashamed.

And we think Mr. Palmer would have shewn a nobleness and a magnanimity of mind in complying with the request of Mr. Philpot's friends, and especially as Mr. Palmer did in the first place mislead Mr. Philpot; we do not mean that Mr. Philpot was misled as to the *book* reviewed, but as to the man who wrote it, for who that knows the truth could, in reading such a book, suppose that Mr. Palmer was a *sinner saved by grace*; and if Mr. Palmer wished to be thought a simple and humble servant to the King, why did he go forth bearing the *badge of Baal-Poor*, and so cause himself to be mistaken, and detected, and treated as a worshipper of false gods.

But as we intend not to enter largely into this dispute, we conclude our remarks, just observing, that on the one hand all those men and ministers who are ever exercising a spirit of bitterness to others, will find that they themselves will in some way have to drink the cup of bitters which they have filled for others; and those, who on the other hand, make intellectual acquirements a part of their religion, must go into the furnace that such dross may be separated from them, and if the people of God will fall out by the way, they must pay for so doing.

Eds.

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GOSPEL AMBASSADOR;
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Christian Pilgrim's Friend.

"Blessed are the poor in Spirit, for their's is the kingdom of Heaven," *Mat. v. 3.*

"The Election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded," *Rom. xi. 7.*

No. 7.

JULY 1, 1847.

Price 2d.

**JAMES WELLS TO THE STRANGERS AND PILGRIMS
 ON THE EARTH SCATTERED ABROAD THROUGH
 THE NORTH OF ENGLAND.**

CHRISTIAN BRETHREN,—I was, as you know, five Lord's days, the last two in April, and first three in May, speaking in the Lord's name at Bethesda Chapel, Oldham Street, Manchester, and I think you will not deem me intrusive in taking this opportunity to acknowledge the Lord's goodness, the kindness of the people, and the warm-hearted reception I every where met with; and in so doing I cannot but take some notice of the state you who are scattered over the North, as people of God, are in. You are all but everywhere disjointed, disunited, and involved in the war of *conflictive elements*; some few though, I hope but few, real Christians still retaining some of that morbid appetite which feeds upon old wives' fables, and seem never better pleased than when some funny thing, some monstrously ill-tempered movement, or some long tale of worldly exercises, or some enormous train of horrible inward blasphemies, &c., are set before them; while the entering into and opening of the scriptures is looked upon as something dangerous and presumptuous, even in the very attempt; and there are ministers who confirm the people in this delusion. They, I mean some who have preached at St. George's Road, they amplify and perpetuate the blemishes and faults of the late Mr. Gadsby, but they do not perpetuate the life, the savour, and the richness of the ministry of that useful man of God; but now how is the gold become dim, and how is the most fine gold changed; what a desolation is St. George's Road, the chapel of the late Mr. Gadsby, and how many were the wonders the Lord wrought by that man; but his work is done, and he is entered into rest.

But what is the aspect now of that little hill of Zion? is it

not all but without form and void, and the heavens shed little or no light upon it? I beheld, and lo, there was no man with ministerial power, and nearly all the birds of the heavens are fled, so that the fruitful place is become as a wilderness. (*Jer.* 4.) Yet both from memory and experience I love that spot still; nor was I ever its foe, but its sincere friend, which, if actions speak louder than words, the whole course of my conduct for six years demonstrates; and nothing would delight me more than to see this cause revive, rise, and prosper, and that this little one may once more become a thousand.

While I was with you I went, as some of you know, from the personal Christian regard I had, to see one of the deacons; he distinctly, and honestly, and plainly told me, that the reason the pulpit was closed against me, was on account of what I said and did on the last Monday evening of preaching there; and being in their view wrong, both in *saying* and *doing*, I must be excluded.

The substance of my saying was, that I stood opposed to all party spirit, and that I could wish that many more causes may rise and prosper, and that I wished every cause well where the Lord is honoured, and where good is done; and that as to Mr. Bidder, who was preaching at the new cause, he was a good man, and the less they fought against him the better. This is the substance of what I *said*; let me look now at what I *did*.

It was this. I sent to the publisher of the *Gospel Ambassador* to send a placard to put up at the door of a bookseller's shop, in order to make the work known; but the placard was no sooner up than it was by some person or persons torn down: this I confess, rather vexed me, and determined me to get a lad to take a hundred copies and sell them opposite the chapel door, and I named this from the pulpit.

This, then, is what I *said* and *did*, yet I was in all this totally unconscious of any disrespect, either to the deacons or to the people; yet some were shrewd enough to *foresee* the injury such steps would do me, and earnestly advised me to be quiet; and I should have acted, not perhaps more *justly* but at least *more wisely*, if I had followed their advice, and I did repent that Satan had gained such advantage over me; but I do *not now* repent, but rather rejoice, as it has been the means of making more conspicuously manifest the hand of the Lord.

And after all, there is nothing in what I said or did to authorize ill feeling, or prejudice, or partiality, for I still think the wrath of man worketh *not* the righteousness of God; and I do further think, that if the deacons of St. George's Road had not altogether misunderstood me in what I said and did, they would not have treated me in the way they have. However, the Lord

had a work for me to do elsewhere, and therefore something must occur to separate me from St. George's Road, at least for a time, and most likely for ever, as I have at present not the least desire to preach at St. George's Road again; but this, like other matters, I desire to leave with the Lord, who is the disposer of all events.

But while there are some who are given too much to that sort of ministry which speaks more to the devil and the preacher's own heart than anything else; as there are some who, dwelling in these miry places, there are on the other hand, some who, to avoid the whirlpool of Caribdas, fall upon the rocks of Scilla, and are all but upon the eve of denying soul discipline altogether. This is not to be wondered at, when it is remembered that these same were held in most miserable bondage and blindness by the worthless and fleshly rubbish which had been set up for Christian experience; when the delusion was manifested to them, when the spell was broken, when cheat was discovered, they rushed out of such a state, and hardly knew where to stop. A little more experience will, I trust, set them right, sober them down, and lead them on in the path of righteousness, in the *midst* of the paths of judgment.

And there are some among them who are for the whole of the truth in all its variety, force, symmetry, and beauty; in a word, it is clear that there is a goodly number of real Christians in Manchester, and thousands scattered over the surrounding towns and counties of the vast population. But they are nearly all scattered as sheep having no shepherd.

All this was clearly manifest to me, both at Manchester and other towns which I visited; how solemn, how refreshing, how delightful was the time I spent with you; what showers of blessings descended upon us at Oldham Street; how are the old fable and falsehoods about my dividing the church of the late William Gadsby, grieving and breaking his heart, and I know not what falsehood and tell-tales beside? how are these fallen, like Dagon before the Ark? and how have the people at Oldham Street been persecuted, reviled, belied, slandered, and abused? all of which they have magnanimously borne, without rendering evil for evil. It is true they are a tried people, and have their burdens to bear; but the good of their souls is the object they have sought, and if truth concerning the circumstances that attended the forming of this new cause in Manchester, if truth were *impartially* told, *which it has not yet been*, how *changed* the scene would be. And it is a truth the days of delusion are numbered, and the reign of falsehood limited; the watch-word in Manchester was, there was only *one* place where men ought to worship; but, thanks unto the Lord, that day is gone by,

and you are beginning to watch in the fear, not of man, but of God, and herein will the Lord of hosts be with you, and the God of Jacob be your refuge. Fear ye not men, neither be afraid of their revilings.

In some places I was shut out of their synagogues; but the Lord went before me and worked mightily.

One or two individuals at Bradford, in Yorkshire, without the authority of the church or people, shut their pulpit against me, and I soon gave them to understand that rather than the people should be tyrannized over, I would come and see what could be done towards forming another cause. This alarmed them, and the Lord stirred up the spirit of some to seek and obtain a place for me to preach in two week evenings, and they, through the good hand of the Lord upon them, obtained a very excellent chapel, and which was well filled, and I was well received and most kindly treated, and the Lord was with us; and the deacon at Bradford, who was the chief in shutting the pulpit against me, contrary to the will of the people, whether he will ever get over this sad blunder of setting himself against the ministry of God's truth, I must leave.

At Preston, no place could be obtained but a Wesleyan Chapel; the Wesleyan minister and many of the Wesleyan congregation came to hear the word of God.

At Accrington, a large Sweden-borgian school room was obtained, and there was a two-fold providence in this; first, the little Baptist Chapel, at Accrington, could not have held all the people; and, secondly, many heard the gospel that would not otherwise have heard it. Here it is again seen that the Lord liveth and reigneth.

Only do not misunderstand me; I do not mean that ministers and people have no right to close their pulpits against me; no, this is not what I mean; my meaning is, that when the people wish to hear a minister, and the deacons from unfounded and unjust prejudice refuse to comply with their request, where men have and exercise such a power as this, they are lording it over God's heritage. Let me be rejected *fairly*, then I am content.

Never did I enjoy more power in my own soul, than in this my last visit to Manchester, for I do not upon the average have so much liberty in preaching any where, as at the Surrey Tabernacle. But in my visit to Oldham Street, Manchester, I seemed to lose nothing of that life and savour I have at my own place.

And now from all this I draw two or three inferences, as that injustice, and prejudice, and bitterness are sure in the end to punish the *authors* more than the objects of such a spirit. And, also, that if we be conscientious we need not fear what man can do, the Lord will appear and make a way for his people. The Lord

wanted me at Manchester; ~~was~~ said, Wells shall not preach again at Manchester; but God said, Yes; and so man is still a liar, and God is still true.

Yes, the Lord did open a way, and that most clearly; spiritually I was blest, and in my lodgings at Mr. Goodfellow's, at Fendleton, I was happy, and was waited upon as though I had been a sort of favourite child in the family, and as I was so every way busy, this suited me well; and as to temporal matters, though in most of my visits I am rather a loser than a gainer, yet the friends met my necessities, and would have surpassed what I ever received at Manchester if I had received all that was offered; but I returned £4, and directly after a letter came from a friend in London, containing a £5 note. I mention this to shew the kindness of the friends at Manchester, the handsome fullness of good feeling manifested by a Christian friend in London, and in all the goodness of the Lord; and thus shall the Lord's people look unto him; they shall be lightened, and their faces shall not be ashamed.

I regret that for want of room I cannot say more at present, but if you will forgive me writing this rather egotistical letter, I will (D.V.) say a word or two next month upon matters more exclusively spiritual.

Yours sincerely in a Saviour's love,

9, St. Ann's Road, Brixton,

JAMES WELLS.

June 21st, 1847.

GODLY EXERCISE.

DEAR SIR,—I again venture to take up my pen to scribble a few lines to you, to inform you a little about the very gracious dealings of the dear Lord towards me from time to time, and what he shews me, as I am able to bear. O what a mercy it is, he does not shew me all at once; for if he did I do think I should sink under the weight thereof to rise no more, for I am sure I could not bear such sights and feelings as I have if the Lord did not hold me by his Almighty power, but how very tenderly he deals with me; and what mercy he does manifest towards me, I feel constrained to acknowledge before him. But it has been my lot to walk in bondage and darkness of mind; long nights and wearisome days have been appointed me; yea, thick darkness and heavy bondage that has been felt, that I have had to grope as the blind for the wall, and to cry, "Enlighten my eyes O Lord, lest I sleep the sleep of death; O spare me that I may recover strength, before I go whence I shall not return, to a land of darkness and the shadow of death;" but it is only the shadow of death. But I was so very weak and blind, I thought

it was death itself; and I shook and trembled, and great fears came upon me, and I am compassed about with gall and bitterness; so bound and fettered in my soul, and my chains were so heavy I could scarcely walk about with them; and they were so severely backed on by the Lord himself, and these words would ring in my ears, "where is now thy hope," and he kept the key, that not one of his dear servants could take them off until he was pleased to give commission, and to say, "Loose the prisoner and let him go." Though they could as it were see me, and tell me where I was in the iron cage, my spirit longing to soar above, but so bound to the earth I could not, yet would gladly do so, that I did groan in my spirit and sigh and cry. "O," said I, "break it, O break it, and let me get out of this prison-house and go free;" but they could not, for they had not the key, so there I must stay as long as my God saw fit to keep me there, but no longer than was needful for my good. But it seemed a long time to me to be in this prison, but the Lord will humble us, and shew what is in our hearts, and he uses such means as are the most opposed to nature to do so. He will shew the sinner what he is, opening by degrees the large cavities within, shewing them the hell within; the caverns of the great deep must be broken up; refuge fail, then their strength fail, and at times I have felt as if all my religion was gone entirely, and I have felt so hard-hearted and so vile as if nothing could break my hard, stubborn heart; but a look from my beloved would melt it in one moment.

Sometimes I could not feel a grain of love for all the world; I have mourned over it very sorely; sometimes I said, "O, Lord, do thou break this stubborn heart of mine." Then says the old enemy, "There you are again; now what can you do? you cannot do any thing." O I have felt so desperate, I have thought nothing could break it, and the enemy sore upon me, I knew not what to do. I would give all the world, if I had it, to feel as I felt in months past, but then I cried mightily to God to appear to my help, but he seemed to regard me not. "O, thought I," surely I am nothing after all but a stony ground hearer, and I shall be an example before all the Church, and people of God; I shall be given up to a reprobate mind and away I shall go, headlong into perdition, a spectacle of terror to all that know me;" for although I could see Magor Missabib written on me, for

"The rocks could roar,
The mountains shake;
All things of feeling show some sign,
But this unfeeling heart of mine."

I have felt I must write and tell you what an awful deceiver I

was, how I had deceived you and the Church, and how my zeal for the things of God was gone, for sometimes I felt I did not care whether I read the word of God, or went to hear the word or did not, yet I was kept going to hear the word, though it seemed hard work to go to hear my own condemnation passed upon me, for that was all it seemed like sometimes, for I seemed to be a

“ Traveller through this vale of tears,
Tried with many doubts and fears;
And the tempter me assail'd,
Till I thought he must prevail.
Then the clouds that intervened,
Dimmed the light I once had seen,
Then I thought my faith was gone,
And that I was left alone.
A traveller on life's dreary coast,
My guide and course seemed lost.
But sometimes I heard a fellow traveller by,
Who had trod this painful way,
Upon whose head these storms had beat,
And many thorns had pierced his feet.

And when faith seemed not all in exercise,

I was enabled in patience to possess my soul,
To be still while these thunders roll'd,
Knowing my Saviour saw me through this gloom,
And would to my assistance come.
For believers thus are tossed about on life's tempestuous main,
But grace assures beyond a doubt they shall the port obtain ;

And that if we believe not he abideth faithful to all, the promises of his most holy word. He will not change his mind, only his dealings towards his children.

His love is the same, and his thoughts and decrees,
As when I can see him and rest on his knees;
Yes, he is a Saviour that is always the same,
God-man in his nature, Jehovah his name.”

I do feel it a very great mercy, notwithstanding all, it cannot be said of me, I have no changes, therefore fear not God, for my soul

“ Through many changes goes ;
But what a mercy his love no variation knows.
His is love that never falters,
Always to its objects true.”

But I said changes and wars are against me, but instead of that they are for my good ; and when in this state of mind, I said, “ Woe is me, for I am undone. What shall be the end of all these things ? ” I said, “ Why is life given to them that are in misery ? O why is my useless life spared, for I seem lost to the world, and dead in the midst of the world, and the world was dead to me, and the society of the Lord's people I could not bear, lest they should ask me how I got on in the Christian cause, and I felt ashamed to tell them the truth of the matter,

so I shunned society as much as possible; I seemed like a pelted sparrow of the wilderness, or a sparrow alone on the house-top; but but this was "the secret place of the stairs, the clofts of the rock," and I thought there was "no eye to pity me and no one to help me." I groaned and sighed out my soul to the Lord for help, natural or spiritual, for I felt that nature's powers were almost exhausted; I seemed to be unfitted for everything, that I said, "Why is life given to one that is bitter, or wilt thou yet shew wonders to the dead; and shall the dead praise thy name?" Though these words would come, "I saw thee when thou wast in the open field, with no eye to pity thee, no power to help thyself; I said unto thee, *Live*, and thou didst live." For feeling is a sign of life, and by light, darkness is manifested; so that I found out by experience, I was not so dark or so dead as I thought I was, but I was exercised with strong pain, and tears were my meat day and night. Then sometimes a little hope would spring up, and I said, "Will the Lord shew wonders to the dead, and shall the dead arise and praise the Lord;" and these words in Isaiah were very sweet sometimes, "Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust, for thy dew is as the dew of herbs; the earth shall cast out the dead, and they that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up as on the wings of an eagle; they shall run in the ways of the Lord and not feel weary; they shall walk and not faint." But it seemed a long time to wait. For nearly three long months I went to the Lord's house, and could see the table spread but could not get a taste of the feast; and so vexed I felt, that I said, "In my father's house is bread to spare, and he careth not that I perish with hunger;" and husks I could not eat. My soul was faint within me; I wanted some of the feast of fat things, and wine of the kingdom: but could not get at it, so I was obliged to wait till I was bidden to eat.

But, blessed be the Lord, he did not suffer me to starve quite, for sometimes I had a crumb just to keep me alive in famine, and that was all I could get, and that I was very glad of; sometimes I got enough to sharpen my appetite for more, and have felt so disappointed that I could not get more, for I knew there was plenty of provision in the Lord's house, but it was all under lock and key, and the Lord himself kept the key of the store-house, and gave out the stores as he pleased; he feeds them all with food the most convenient for them; and if any are sick, he administers medicine that is sure to do them good, though very nauseous to the palate; and we seldom like the means he is pleased to use for our recovery; the means seem very rough sometimes, but this physician is sure to make a cure of the worst case he undertakes—he cannot fail to do so, for he is so perfectly acquainted with the nature of the complaints he

undertakes, and the cause also is known to him so perfectly, that he cannot be deceived or make any mistake whatever, for he it is that wounds and afflicts them, and he does it all in love to their souls. But sharp are his arrows dipped in blood, and when they pierce the heart, they wound so deep, that none but God can take away the smart and heal their wounds. But he doth not afflict willingly, or grieve his children unless it is needful for their good; he will try them, and teach them, and will shew them what is in their hearts, but they knew not that it is the Lord's dealings with them untill he shews them, "For," says the Lord by his prophet *Hosea*, 11. 3, 4. "I taught Ephraim also to go, taking them by their arms; but they knew not that I healed them. I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love, and I was to them as they that take off the yoke on their jaws, and I laid meat unto them." And since the dear Lord has been pleased to remove this yoke from my jaws, I can feed again; I can now see that is what I have been entangled in for the first three months of this year. But I did not see it so till I heard Mr. Osbourn open up these words, and my eyes being opened, and my ears being unstopped, my understanding being enlightened, I was made to see clearly what this yoke did mean, and felt persuaded it had been worn by me, for when this yoke was on me I could not speak plainly, I could not say, Shibolet, my God, my Father. I could not eat, or talk, or read with this yoke on, neither could I get it off untill the Lord was pleased to take it off and set meat before me, and say, "Eat, O friend; drink abundantly, O my beloved." Then I could say without a faltering tongue, "My God, my beloved." Then I could eat, and praise the Lord. But it was while hearing Mr. Banks, of Crosby Road, that I was so blessedly set at liberty, and the yoke taken off, and the lawful captive was delivered and set free. O, how delightful liberty is to the soul that has felt what bondage is. O, how it does embrace its dear Lord, it seems locked in the embrace for a time. O, how they do rejoice in the Lord, how they do love him, how they do eat his word, and find it sweeter than honey-dew to their souls. The preacher said, "I know not why I am led to speak from these words, but they were laid on my mind with some sweet participation in them this morning, which was Lord's day, May 9th, and a blessed day it was to me." O, what a transition it was from bondage to the glorious liberty of the children of God. The words taken as a text, were from *Psa* 86. 11, 12, and 13, and how sweetly the words did take hold of my soul, I shall never forget; the preacher said, "What thank you or know you about the faith of participation, or expectation and deliverance, before you get it?" O, thought I, I know what

that is for ; I did expect to realise deliverance before I got it, though I knew not how or by what means, nor did I know the time was fully come to favour Zion, yet I felt constrained to go and hear Mr. Banks, as I could not hear Mr. O. well ; but the reason was bondage, so I found, for since then I can feed, and do grow and thrive amazingly—so great is the difference of bondage and liberty. I felt constrained to go again to hear Mr. B. in the evening, so I went, fully expecting to get a good meal, for now my appetite was very sharp ; I was very eager to get every crumb I could ; the text at that time was from *Zech.* 8. 13, “And it shall come to pass that ye were a curse among the heathen, O, house of Judah and house of Israel, so will I save you, and ye shall be a blessing. Fear not, only let your hand be strong.”

The preacher said in the course of the service, several times, “I cannot tell why I am led to talk in this way, and why I am led to speak from these words, but I do hope and pray the Lord to bless this sermon to some poor tried child of his. I do feel, he said, the Lord will bless it to some one.” O, thought I, it is all for me, for I felt as though there was none else present but me and the preacher ; and my beloved Lord spake to me and said, “Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away ; for the winter is past, the summer is over and gone, the flowers appear on the earth ; the time of the singing of birds is come. Arise and shine, for thy light is come and the glory of thy Lord is risen on thee.” O how quickly I did obey his call, and came forth to light and liberty ; and I said, “My beloved is mine, and I am his.” I said, “I will love thee, Lord, with my whole heart ; take my heart, it shall be thine, thine it shall ever be ; I will praise thee, O Lord, with my whole heart, I will glorify thy name for evermore, for great is thy mercy towards me ; thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest hell.” I took hold on my beloved ; I said,

“I will not let thee go,
Till a blessing thou bestow.”

So I held him fast by faith ; and these words were so precious, “I will make you a blessing ; fear not, only let your hands be strong.” I said, “O Lord, thou must give me strength, or I shall get none.” He said, “I will strengthen *thee*, yea, I will uphold *thee* with the right hand of my righteousness ; I will be a wall of fire around about *thee* ; and the glory in the midst of *thee* ; I will instruct *thee*, and lead *thee*, and teach *thee* to profit ; I will guide *thee* with mine eye.” O what sweet way-marks these are to set up ; what sweet Bethel visits these are for the poor soul ; O what sweet communion I have had with my dear Lord and God ; truly my fellowship is with the Father and with

his Son Jesus Christ, and sweet fellowship it is ; I find it so. O what vanity does this world's good appear to me now ; I envy not the rich or great ; I would not change with the greatest monarch in this poor perishing world, now I know what true happiness consists in. They are happy souls that know and worship Jacob's God ; nor men or devils can break my peace, while with my dear Lord in view. Old things have ceased and all seems new.

" O how sweet to leave this world awhile
And find the presence of our God ;
And Jesus on our souls does smile,
And light and joy attend the word."

Then we do eat and feel satisfied, and praise the name of the Lord ; " Our souls do magnify the Lord, and our spirits do rejoice in God our Saviour." Then we can run in the way of the Lord with delight, and joy fills our souls, and our souls can make their boast of the Lord all the day long ; yea, our very souls dance for joy, we seem so delighted that we have found our beloved, and rest in his love, for his mouth is most sweet, yea, he is the " altogether lovely, the chiefest among ten thousand." Truly his love is better than wine, his name is as ointment poured forth. The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear ? the Lord is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid ? he maketh my feet like hinds' feet, and maketh me walk on mine high places.

But surely covenant love, covenant engagement, covenant blood, covenant transactions, and eternal settlements and arrangements, are high places to walk upon ; and eternal purposes, eternal election, predestination, and redemption, eternal sanctification, by Jesus Christ, are high places to range upon ; here is a large field open to our view : " by covenant transactions and blood," says Jesus, " my people are mine, and mine they are for ever ; for here will I dwell for ever, for I have desired it for an habitation for ever ;" it will never wear out or decay, and his mind will not alter concerning it ; he will not desire any other, for he has fixed his love on these, and they shall all be brought to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, and shall grow up to the stature of men in Christ, though some lesser and weaker than others ; and they shall grow as the vine, and shall put forth their roots as Lebanon, and shall flourish in the courts of our God ; and they shall blossom as the rose, and shall be like lillies in the garden of the Lord, and he himself says, " I will water it every moment, lest any hurt it ; I will keep it night and day ;" and so much does he value his flowers, that he will not allow any one but himself to gather one of them ; he cannot spare one of his lillies, for he requires them all ; he has a

place for every one in his house above ; as soon as they are fully blown he will come into his garden and gather them himself, but he will not pluck one until he wants them, for he knows they are fit for the upper courts whenever he is pleased to gather them ; they are waiting till he is ready for them above.

I have sometimes thought what a happy day it will be to me when the dear Lord is ready for me in the upper courts above ; O what a sweet prospect it must be when the messenger of death comes with his commission from the King of kings to take my poor body out of this world, and my spirit shall ascend above to my Father's house, for that is my home, for death to the saint is victory now ;

" A victor putting on his crown,
The victory gained, the laurel waved,
The Saviour crowned, the sinner saved,
The wedding morn, the nuptial day,
The bridegroom takes his bride away,
To dwell with him, for that's her home ;
She hails him, Come, Lord Jesus, come,
Call it not death, its sting is gone."

It is accession to a throne, a chariot sent from heaven to bring a ransomed spirit to a King. O what a glorious transaction it must be to enter into a world of spirits of just men made perfect, to see our dear Lord the King of glory sitting on his throne, holding in his hand the golden sceptre towards us as we approach him ; with what eager eyes shall I survey that happy place, with what eagerness shall I approach the King, for there I shall see him in his beauty, and behold him face to face, when this body shall be left below, and earth exchanged for heaven, and my Lord shall say unto me, " Come in, thou blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you before the foundation of the world ;" not prepared for some one else, and they lost it by not complying with my exhortation, and not helping me to convert the world, and so on ; O no, I could not enter heaven with delight if I thought this would be true, but I know it is not ; for the inheritance shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father, says Christ, and we know he cannot make any mistake, or leave any of this inheritance not inherited. O no ; and all his sheep shall come to Zion, with them Christ will never part, for all his chosen cost him wounds, and blood, and smart, and he will not part with them at any price ; for having loved his own, he loves them to the end, and he will see that not one is absent at the last great day ; for he could not say, " Here am I, and all that thou hast given to me," if one were absent ; O no, I could not feel happy if I thought there was the least uncertainty about my arriving safe home at last. I cannot receive such a doctrine as this on any account whatever.

But I am quite surprised to find I have scribbled on so much paper already ; I had no idea of writing near so much, but I have not done yet, though I am sorry to find I have written four sheets already. I fear you will not have patience to read it when I have done ; but that is my failing, I cannot write short letters ; when I begin I know not where to leave off. But I must scribble a little more. If I thought that doctrine was true I should live in continual fear lest I should lose my crown at last, for I feel I am safe no longer than the dear Lord holds me up, and I have to cry continually, " Hold thou me up, O Lord, and I shall be safe ; for my feet had well nigh slipped, but thy mercy held me up, and keeps me safe from falling." I could not rest in any thing like uncertainty in matters of so much importance as are these things, but I feel it a very great mercy to know that all is settled, firm and sure, and my soul approves it well ; and that I do know, and I feel it a very great mercy to be brought to lay down at the feet of my dear Redeemer, and say, " Thy will be done, by me and in me ; I desire to know no will but thine ; do with me as thou please, let it be what it may, only let me have thy sweet smiles ; frown not upon me, and hide not thy face from me, and do thou talk with me and keep me here in this state of mind, for I shall remain here no longer than I am kept ;" for if the dear Lord leave off communing with me I soon return to my own place again of discontent and misery, for I am happy no longer than I can see my Lord in view, for as soon as he hides his face the beasts of the forest creep forth ; they are all here still, quite ready to come out of their dens ; so soon as I am left alone out they come, all kind of evil beasts, and wild animals, and creeping things. O, what a sight it is ; I cannot bear the sight of them ; they seem to come from the bottomless pit ; there seems to be no end to them, they are so many, and all kinds of evil spirits come into me. Then doubts and gloomy fears arise, and I seem like a little hell, so loathsome, so filthy, so vile, and such an offensive smell ascends from this pit of corruption, I cannot tell how to bear it, for I really feel I have a hell within me to my sorrow ; but what a mercy it is these evil spirits are chained down, or I know not what mischief they would do me. But I know they can go no farther than my God is pleased to permit them, for he has the keys of hell and death ; all the powers of darkness are governed by his Almighty power and skill. O what a God is our God, surely there is none like him ; he is a God over all, blessed for evermore, the Lord God omnipotent reigneth in heaven and on the earth, and who can hinder him or stay his hand, or say unto him, " What doest thou ?"

O how blessed it is to have the God of the whole earth and

the God of heaven for our help, for our friend, our guide, and protector through life, and in death he will be with us to lead into the heavenly Jerusalem above. But it is not death to a believer, it is going home or going to court to see the King of kings, and Lord of lords. O sweet home, how I long to go home, for this is not my rest, this world is not my home. I look for a city that hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God, where the inhabitants shall no more say, I am sick, for the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquities; where the inhabitants have no need of the sun, for the Lord God and the Lamb are the light thereof; and they look unto him, and are lightened, and their faces are not ashamed; where we shall sorrow no more for ever, nor sigh, nor cry, for God shall wipe away all tears from their faces before they leave this world, and they will have nothing to sorrow about when they get there. All their sorrows left below, and earth exchanged for heaven. O, happy time; Lord, bid me come, and enter my eternal home.

M. A. M.

EXTRACT FROM THE LIFE OF MRS. MARY HARRISON.

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4 The first news I heard of her awakening, was in February, 1697. A good woman of my church came to my house late at night, with shew of some more than ordinary tidings in the form of her countenance, she desired to speak with me in my study, where we were no sooner sat down, but she told me in a melancholy tone, Mrs. Mary Harrison was in deep despair, and requested me immediately to repair to her. Whether Mrs. Mary sent her, or she came of her own head, I do not remember. I want words to tell you how exceedingly I was surprised at this unexpected news: I replied, it was then late, and as I thought, unseasonable to give her a visit; and the next day I was unavoidably engaged in a journey, which I could by no means put off, but at my return would not fail to be with her, if the Lord pleased. With this answer I dismissed the messenger, after whose departure I began seriously to revolve in my mind, the strangeness of the relation: what! thought I, Mrs. Mary Harrison, a proud, vain, ignorant creature, in despair about her soul; sure this is some mistake, for I thought as strange of it, as Thomas did of his Master's resurrection; and was ready to say with him except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe. So thought I, except

I hear it from her own mouth, and see cause by proper actions, and suitable expressions, to judge the thing real, I will not, I cannot believe it. Indeed Ananias was not more backward to give credit to the conversion of Saul, than I was to any such change in her; for as he had argued in defence of his incredulity, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem: and here he hath authority from the chief Priests, to bind all that call on thy name. And can such a man be so changed on a sudden? Ah! how dull are the best of men, in believing the wonders of free grace: so was I saying to myself; I have heard by many, yea, by her own mother, of this young woman, that she was mightily puffed up with pride, and of the things of the gospel extremely ignorant; and I never heard any body speak of her being inclined to any thing that is good; and now full of horror about eternity, now concerned even to despair about her immortal soul.

How, or from whence, can this sudden, this unaccountable change be? I must confess to my shame, I did not know what to think of it; and could scarce give this report any entertainment, (especially such a welcome one, as a true one of this nature deserve,) in the retiring room of my heart: however, though I did not that night speak to her, I spoke for her and spread that unintelligible, and indeed, almost incredible account I had received before the Lord, and fervently begged if there were not, that there might be something in it; that it might be the Lord's time to open her blind eyes, to break her hard heart, to enliven her dead soul, and breathe into her the breath of life. The morrow, according to my appointment, I went my journey, but could not get her out of my thoughts, neither on the road nor at the place where I was, whatever company I was in or whatever business I was about, my mind still ran on Mrs. Mary Harrison; I purposely hastened my return home, much longing to see her, and to be satisfied how it was with her; whether there were indeed any breathings in her heart, any sense in her soul, any apprehension of her present misery or a future eternity, and from what ground this sense arose, and what operation it had in her inward man. As soon therefore, as I came home, even before I pulled off my boots, I went to her, and found her in her chamber alone, sitting in a very disconsolate posture, her face clouded, her eyes cast down, and her physiognomy so miserably altered, that I could not but call to mind that of the Poet, *Qui color albus erat nunc est contrarius albo*. After salutations, I sat down by her, and enquired into her case, demanding, what made her look so melancholy, and seclude herself from company. She replied, she had reason enough to be melan-

choly, for that she was one of the lost persons from whom the gospel was hid. I had a little before, at the desire of a godly friend, preached two Sermons on 2 *Cor.* iv 3. But if our gospel be hid it is hid to them that are lost, which the Lord blessed with success to more than this maiden gentlewoman; another was awakened by it, who since joined to our church. But I told Mrs. Mary she argued wrongly against herself; for if the gospel were indeed hid from her, she would have no manner of sense of that judgment; for all that are reprobates, and so in a lost state the gospel being hid from them, are past feeling, having their consciences seared, as with an hot iron. But you, said I, having through mercy, such a quick feeling, and being so awfully apprehensive of the dreadfulness of the judgment, are so far from having the gospel hid from you, that you may be assured God is graciously coming towards you, to reveal the beauty and glory of it unto you. This did not satisfy her, but persisting in her despairing language, told me, she was in a perishing condition, and should be damned. I asking a reason of this desperate conclusion, she with a ghastly look and mournful accent, answered, I have been a great sinner, and there is no mercy or pardon for me; What shall I do? what will become of me for ever? At the pronouncing of these words she trembled, wrung her hands, and wept bitterly. Upon which I applied myself to her in the following terms;—Mrs. Mary, you through ignorance, as yet, of the gospel, are guilty of a great mistake, in inferring an impossibility of pardon from the greatness of your sins; for this is to argue against the nature of free grace, (which overtakes and fastens hold on the very greatest and worst of sinners;) and against the compact of the Father and the Son, in the covenant of redemption; for as in that covenant, the Father on his part, promiseth the sending down of the Spirit, to bow and bend the wills and incline the hearts of the most obstinate and rebellious sinners, to lay hold upon a Saviour, by a true and lively faith; so the Son on his part, promiseth to give himself a propitiatory sacrifice upon the cross, sufficient to atone for the greatest sins any of the posterity of Adam could possibly be guilty of; whereby, to the amazement of men and angels, pardon is not only a gracious but a righteous act in God, and the sinner may plead for it upon account of that everlasting atonement made by the Son of God. This the Apostle John, who leaned on Christ's bosom, and thereby knew the secrets of his heart, and the wonders of redeeming grace flowing from his lips; I say, he, even he, plainly declares and clearly holds forth this adorable truth in that gospel apothegm, 1 *Epistle* 1. 9. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just (mark that) to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Moreover, I further told

her, this arguing is against the very literal meaning of many sweet and precious promises made by the Lord Himself, on purpose to put such poor distressed creatures as you are, out of doubt of his grace and mercy; as that in *Isaiah* 1. 18. Come now and let us reason together, saith the Lord, though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red as crimson, they shall be as wool. Come Mrs. Mary, said I, what do you think of this reasoning from the richness of the covenant of grace, and from the infiniteness of that satisfaction made for sin by the Lord Jesus Christ, the Mediator of the new covenant? Her answer was, This promise belongs to those that are in Christ, but I am far enough from him, and have no mind to him, nor any heart to believe in him, nor can I do any thing that is good.

I told her she spoke as a legalist, not yet acquainted with the way and mystery of the gospel, which calls persons from themselves, and shows them their utter inability and incapacity to do anything of themselves. Then I turned her to another promise, *Isaiah*, 43. 24. Thou hast bought me no sweet cane with money, neither hast thou filled me with the fat of thy sacrifices, but thou hast made me to serve with thy sins, thou hast wearied me with thine iniquities. I asked her what she could say worse of herself; than God said of this people, so full of all manner of abominations. But yet, said I, pray observe the two next verses, 25, 26. I, even I, am he, that blotted out thy transgressions, for my own sake, and will not remember thy sins. Put me in remembrance, let us plead together: declare thou, that thou mayest be justified. I told her from these words, that a putting God in remembrance of his gracious promise, to pardon and forgive sin, any sin, all sins, how great soever, and to blot out all iniquities, let their magnitude or multitude be what it will, upon the account of Christ's infinite satisfaction, which he has given to divine justice, and an humble, yet earnest, pleading the seal of it at the throne of grace, would be more pleasing and acceptable to God, and far more comfortable and beneficial for her, than thus in diffidence and despair, to lie down under the sense of guilt, and give up herself as lost. The answer she made, was, This promise, how sweet soever in itself it was, could be of no use, nor afford any comfort to her in her present condition; for that she could not pray or plead at all, and her heart was quite barred and bolted against any good motion or inclination, and she was as one wholly destitute of the Spirit, and forsaken of God; and then lamentably cried out, My day is past, and I am undone, undone! I asked her if ever she was in the like condition before: she answered, No, never in her life. Then I told her, what she had said, was not, could not be true, if God's

word may be believed ; for according to that, none but those who were once enlightened (which she never was before) and have tasted of the heavenly gift (which she never before did) and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, (which did never stir in her before) and having tasted the good word of God (the relish and savour of which, she never before understood) and the powers of the world to come (to which she had been hitherto altogether a stranger) can possibly be in danger of having their day past ; and therefore this being the first time of God's coming towards her in an awakening manner, alarming her soul with the sense of a future state, though her sins were so terribly set in order before her ; yet her distracting and terrifying fears were without any scriptural ground ; for, as I further alleged, this was God's common way of dealing with those whom he designed special love and mercy to ; first, to show them their lost and undone condition by nature, as they are the wretched offspring of fallen Adam, and to shake them over the scorching flames of hell, and make them tremblingly apprehensive of his deserved wrath and indignation, that so the redemption wrought out by, and made most secure in the Lord Jesus Christ, might be the more precious and valuable to them when they are made to see it, and have a joyful sense of it by the enlightening efficacy of God's Spirit, which she was now believingly to be expecting of ; for I assured her, in the name of the great God, it was not far from her, urging, for her support under the burden of her present calamity, that sweet promise, *Heb. 2. 3.* For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak and not lie : though it tarry, wait for it, because it will surely come, it will not tarry. By vision here, I told her, is meant the manifestation of the light of God's countenance, and the glory of his presence ; and there is a secret appointed time in the breast of the Father, for reviving the drooping spirit and ravishing the saddened heart of every elect son and daughter of Adam, with this great and glorious mercy : but she must patiently wait this appointed time for it ; and this plain word of God assures her, she would not be deceived in her expectation. I also, for her encouragement, instanced the bitter passion of sorrow poor *Mary Magdalen* was in from the sense of her horrid sins, and most vile and filthy pollutions ; and the great and soul amazing shakings the gaoler had, from the dreadful apprehensions of his miserable state, and the doleful agonies of his soul, in the sense of hell and damnation : and yet what comfort both of them met with, what abundant satisfaction both of them had by the Lord's speaking effectual peace to their souls. But whatever I could say, and much more, through the good hand of my God upon me, to this purpose I did say ; she still continued in a

lamentable manner under the power of despair, hideously crying out she was sure there was no mercy for her; by which I perceiving, that no words, how right soever, were at present forcible, so as to have any effect upon her. It growing late, and I much wearied with travelling and speaking, after solemn seeking the Lord for her, I at that time left her; I cannot tell you whether with more joy or sorrow: joy, that there was so eminent a work begun in her, which plainly appeared to me to be of God, for I saw a thorough work of conviction wrought by the mighty power of Jehovah in her soul; and I doubted not, but designed by Him who brings forth meat out of the eater, and sweet out of the strong, for her eternal good, though the tempter, for the present, had such an ascendant upon her; or sorrow, that she was groveling in such hideous darkness, and left to struggle with the horrors of a wounded spirit, which, as the wise man implicitly tells us, is far more deplorable and much less tolerable than any sickness or infirmity, how great or sore soever, of the body, can be.

WE WOULD SEE JESUS.

BELOVED BROTHER,—Grace, mercy, and peace be multiplied unto you, and the whole election of grace. The pathway of the Lord's children, the seed royal, is through the wilderness; it is a solitary way, through an enemy's country, in which there are fiery serpents and scorpions. It is a desert land where there is no water; but the travellers are bound for a better country, where there is plenty of rich, suitable, and satisfying food—where there is fountains of living water; to that country where the inhabitants shall not say they are *sick, sorrowful, or exhausted*; no *temptations* to distress, no *fears* to perplex, no *darkness* to becloud, all shall be joy, peace, and eternal happiness. How sweet, how reviving to have a few grapes from that celestial world. Precious are the true tokens Jesus gives of the possession of that kingdom; “The saints of the most high shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever.” The saints shall possess it. Who are the saints? a mere profession of religion does not make a saint; to have our judgment rightly informed in matters relating to truth does not; to have our names enrolled in a church book here below do not; but the truth brought into the heart in the love of it, the teaching and bedewing power of the Holy Ghost, the robe of Jesus' righteousness placed upon us, constitutes us *saints*. There are many saints that dare not believe they are such; there is many just brought out of Egypt crying, sighing, and groaning after the Lord, after the sincere milk of the word, after the streaming,

gushing, smitten rock, after the bread of life, after a testimony of Sonship, after real deliverance. And what is their true desire? Is it not, "We would see Jesus." This surely is the cry, the desire of such as have felt the burden of sin upon the conscience, and that know something of sin in its awful turpitude, principle, and purpose; the desire of all such as know any thing about *Mount Sinai*. Such want the sight of Jesus as their Redeemer, their God and salvation, as their friend, brother, and Saviour. The lover of truth, eternal truth, wants to see him in prosperity. What is prosperity in the world to the real lover of truth without a sight of Jesus? Why, his very prosperity to him is a trouble, there is an emptiness in it without a precious view of Jesus; the tried follower of the meek, lowly, and glorious Redeemer in adversity wants to see Jesus. Oh! says the poor soul, could I but see Jesus *mine*, did I but know my interest in his eternal love, in his everlasting covenant, in his finished work, this would be like the tree put into the bitter waters, these waters would instantly become sweet, and I could rejoice in tribulation. Oh! to see him as the brother born for adversity, in the fulness of his grace, in the sweetness of electing love, in the triumphs of redeeming grace, in the provisions of his mercy, in the complexity of his person, in union with his people, how it strengthens our hope, refreshes our soul, increases our love, endears his name. You, my brother, know these things to be true, comforting, and strengthening. The dead carnal professor desires not the truth, desires not Christ, for there is nothing in Christ suitable or attractive to the unsoftened, unconquered, and unregenerated heart of such a one. Sometimes you feel lest after all you prove to be such a one. Satan says you are; the imperious evils of your own heart say so too; the dogmatical heady-professor seems to tell you the same, and the coldness of your heart, the darkness, barrenness, and confusion of your own mind seem to substantiate these groundless suspicions. Oh! what tempests, what tossings, what temptations, trials, and afflictions the children of the kingdom have to pass through. Oh! what changes, darkness and light, liberty and bondage, confidence and fear, groaning and singing, poverty and riches. But blessed be God in his Trinity of persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, you cannot be brought to hate the truth again, you are brought out of enmity to the truth into the love of truth and God; you love God's eternal and electing love, the robe of Immanuel's perfect righteousness, the finished and complete work of Christ. Oh! Calvary's sacred spot, how memorable by the blood, agony, and death of Christ; there Christ cried, "It is finished." There he promised eternal life to the thief, the dying malefactor; there he poured out his soul unto death.

No one knows the beauty and colour of a rose, unless he sees it. So no one can tell the beauty, colour, the sweetness and fragrance of the rose of Sharon, unless this rose has been exhibited to him. May you be favoured with continued manifest company of Jesus, the teaching and dewy power of the holy comforter, and with access to the Father. Mr. Wells has been one evening to Cheltenham, preached a very sweet, profitable, and instructive sermon; and, you will doubtless think, I was very much pleased to see my Father; most children, yea, all affectionate children love to see their parents. This is all I have to tell you, unless it is that I am returned from a visit to Manchester, which I hope was made useful to the Lord's people. My affliction in the family still continues. The Lord bless, comfort, and guide you and yours. Amen. Yours in the truth,
JOHN BLOMFIELD.

CELESTIAL FRUIT.

"As the apple-tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste."

We shall not transgress, nor give offence to the household of faith, by saying that the above words express the lively feelings, and heart-cheering sentiments of every heaven-born soul in relation to his views, love, attachment, and high regard that he has for Christ the Lord of life and glory, and the precious and soul-exhilarating Gospel which Christ is the sum and substance of. As in Christ dwelleth all the fulness of the God-head; so, of course, the Gospel, with all its riches, charms, beauties, and glories, are treasured up in him, and without him the Gospel itself would be but a dry breast, and a barren matrix. Christ then, is the sea of love, the fountain of life, the spring of comfort, the elixir of the Gospel, and our mystical Apple-Tree. And here is provided, and now is in readiness, every thing that we can wish for or crave, or that is calculated to encourage us to hope and trust in God. A Saviour, and a great one, is by the figure of this apple-tree pointed out and placed before us, and he is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him; and his blood cleanseth us from all sin; and his heart is tender and loving; and he is full of grace and truth; and the Father hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name, and in him blessed us with all spiritual blessings; and in him made us accepted.

All that we have here stated is true, and strictly true, of this transcendent, but mystical, Apple-Tree; and for the encouragement of sin sick souls, we may venture to allege that this blessed

Tree of Life will cast none out that come to him for pardon and peace; nor will he forsake them after he has received them to favour; 'tis not the manner of this friend so to do: nor will he suffer them finally to leave him, for he says, I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me, *Jer.* 32. 40.

Also, this same compassionate Friend is the Church's head; for the eternal Father hath put all things under the feet of his eternal Son, and gave him to be the head over all things to the Church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth him all in all; and thus in him she is complete, and hence he says to her, "Behold thou art fair my love," *Eph.* 1. 22, 23; *Col.* 2. 10; *Song.* 1. 15. Here the Church is safe; and when under the shadow of the mystical Apple-Tree she is happy, and cries out and says, "As the apple-tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste."

Here she solaces herself and proves the place to be a comfortable shade and a pleasant retreat; and as the fruit is peculiarly sweet to her taste, and strengthening to her heart, and encouraging to her hope, she calls it Celestial: and because it grows on the mystical Apple-Tree, we, by way of distinction, shall in future call it, **CELESTIAL FRUIT FROM THE TREE OF LIFE.**

All the fruit growing on this superior Tree is of the celestial kind; and hence, rich and good, and well calculated to make one healthy, wealthy and wise. It also is admirably adapted to the miseries and wants of all sin-sick sinners, and returning prodigals; and the ample supply of it is always fresh and green, and to be had at all times without money and without price. And strictly speaking, the condition on which it can be obtained, is a deep sense of our own inward pollution, depravity, ignorance, weakness, poverty, wants and woes.

J. OSBOURN.

THE KING'S DAUGHTER.

Who is she that comes up from the wilderness,—her,
 With perfumes of frankincense, aloes, and myrrh?
 Who is she that comes thence, like a pillar of smoke,
 With her graces beclouded, her heart almost broke?
 O! 'tis the King's Daughter, all-glorious within,—
 'Tis the Spouse, mourning o'er her corruption and sin.
 Say, what will ye now in the Shulamite see?
 Flesh and spirit still warring—grace conquering and free.
 Thro' floods, and thro' flames, in temptation's dark path,
 She leans on her Lord, pressing onward by faith.
 His grace and his promise her spirit sustain,
 While she triumphs in weakness, affliction, and pain.

In Mesech she dwells, wolves and serpents among ;
Now of self she complains, now of Christ is her song :
Enrob'd in his merit, and wash'd in his blood,
Joy, grief, sweet and bitter still work for her good.

Though her Lord's gone on high, unto her he hath given
Sweet promises, pledges, and foretastes of heaven :
The joys of his presence he thence doth afford,
While his glory she views in the glass of his Word.

And oft in the desert he spreads her a feast,
Where sweet is the fruit of his love to her taste.
His love banner o'er her ;—when fainting with fear,
With the wine of his kingdom her heart doth he cheer.

When his presence he hides, she in solitude mourns ;
Eternally true, to his Dove he returns.
When him she forgets, he renews his love-plea ;
He ne'er will forsake her, for 'Faithful' is he.

Tho' redeem'd from her sin, and to heav'n on her way,
His wisdom hath will'd awhile longer her stay.
In this dark weeping world, all her graces to prove,
More to loath her vile self, more to prize his rich love.

In his Father's fair kingdom, all perfectly plann'd.
Are mansions of glory as built to his hand :
He is gone there before, to prepare her a place,
That she ever may dwell in the light of his face.

Ere long, he will send of bright angels a band,
To bear his Bride home to Immanuel's land.
His glory-pav'd chariot of love soon will bring
His Spouse to the seat of her Sire and her King.

Oft she looks tow'rd the hills of her heavenly home,
The Bride, thro' the lattice, cries, "Come, Jesus! come."
"Why lingers thy chariot, Lord! why doth it stay?"
"Come, Jesus! and me to my kingdom convey."

Thro' a long night of darkness, of sorrow and sin,
The promises haste a bright day to bring in ;
Lo! it breaks on her eyes! the fair dawn they behold
Of that day which her Lord and his prophets foretold.

Now Jesus, the God, the wide firmament rends,
With angels and saints, he in grandeur descends.
The earth and sea vanish to make the Judge room,
The day of his glory and vengeance is come.

With clouds as his chariot, Messiah appears!
No crown of mock-majesty Jesus now wears:—

In his Father's bright glory, in that of his own,
He comes; his love, justice, and wrath to make known.

The Bridegroom now cometh. The bride ready stands,
And her virgin-companions with palms in their hands :
The harps are all strung, and the trumpets are blown,
The angels are seated, the King's on his throne !

In the DEITY's presence, while seraphim bow,
And cry, " Father ! Almighty, All-holy art thou."
Emmanuel presents his divinely lov'd Bride,
His glorious Church,— perfect, pure, justified.

In raiment of gold and of needle-work wrought,
All glorious, she unto the Father is brought :
The King's Daughter stands near the throne of the King,
Without spot, or blemish, or any such thing.

The pearly-gate City, the palace within,
She enters with joy, far from sorrow and sin :
She drinks of the river and fountain of life,
And angels with wonder behold the Lamb's wife.

With golden harps sounding, and hymns ever sweet,
The saints cast their crowns at Emmanuel's feet.
O blessed and happy to whom it is giv'n
To sit at the Lamb's marriage-supper in heav'n !

"Ye bless'd of my Father ! ye ransom'd ! receive
"The kingdom, which 'tis his good pleasure to give,—
"Which for you was prepar'd, ere I form'd the round world,
"Or Satan to flaming perdition was hurl'd."

The Church now triumphant,—her faith chang'd to sight,
Her God is her glory, her joy, and her light !
Thro' much tribulation the martyrs here came,
And their conquest ascribe to the blood of the Lamb.

"To him who hath lov'd us, and wash'd us"—they sing—
"From our sins in his blood, our high anthems we bring.
"Salvation, might, majesty, glory, and pow'r,
"To the Lamb in the midst of the throne, evermore."

The foes of the Church, from the presence of God
Now are banish'd, and plung'd into hell's black abode ;
Where their worm never dies, and the fire never ends,
And the smoke of their torment for ever ascends.

Thro' heaven's wide concave resound the glad strains,
"Alleluia ! The Lord God omnipotent reigns !
"Thou hast heard the complaint of thy saints, King of men !
"And avenged ~~our~~ blood. Alleluia ! Amen."

THE
GOSPEL AMBASSADOR;
OR,
Christian Pilgrim's Friend.

"Blessed are the poor in Spirit, for their's is the kingdom of Heaven," *Mat. v. 3.*

"The Election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded," *Rom. xi. 7.*

No. 8.

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Price 2d.

JAMES WELLS TO THE STRANGERS AND PILGRIMS
SCATTERED OVER THE NORTH OF ENGLAND.

CHRISTIAN FRIENDS,—I did not intend my last letter as a *detailed* account of my five weeks' visit among you, and therefore many things were omitted. I made no mention of my visit to Oldham, where, though not so numerously attended as at some other places, yet I trust the word was blest; and where, by the much esteemed gentleman and Christian friend who obtained a chapel for me to preach in, I was very kindly treated, and who after the service handsomely made me a present of a sovereign, and who very kindly pressed me to stay all night at his house, but it being but ten miles (I think it is ten) by railway, and there being four friends there going that evening to Manchester, and I being very busy, wished, in order to save time, to get to my lodgings that evening. We had about three miles to walk to the station of the main line from Leeds to Manchester, and the Christian friend above alluded to kindly accompanied us part of the way; but he no sooner left us than we got into a pretty plight; we met with a man who directed us to leave the main road and cross the fields as a nearer way to the station; we were glad of this direction, for it being now about ten o'clock at night, we began to fear we should not reach the station until after the last train was gone.

Our company consisted of three young men, myself, and a good stout Christian woman, and we trudged on very comfortably, talking over the best things, and thought ourselves to be a very comfortable little party; here we were, with the world as it were to ourselves, and thought we were talking right, and walking right, and aiming right, and should get to the station right, and get home right; but I need not here state how we wandered along until we found ourselves among coal pits,

coal carriages, canals, bogs, ditches, hedges, embankments, windings, and turnings, which all but outdid the terrestrial wisdom we were possessed of; as for Mrs. ———, she certainly manifested no deficiency either of strength or resolution, she faced the bog, the hedge, the ditch, and all the difficulties of the way most nobly; but poor little John, one of the young men, I think was once or twice a little nervous; he ran down once from the bank of the canal expressing some alarm lest he should for a few moments become an inhabitant of the same, and if old Diogenes the Cynic, had been there, it could not have prevented our stopping to have our laugh out at poor little John.

We at length got out of our present difficulties and dangers, and found ourselves on the Oldham branch railway; here we might have been taken into custody as trespassers, but we escaped. I need not here relate that when we got to the station, the *last train was gone*, that the watchman at the station looked at us rather *curiously*; we ourselves had half a mind to be a little serious over it; that an engine and tender were coming up the line and going up to Manchester, that the watchman (who had now become quite friendly with us) stopped the engine; I need not say that here we were among coke and smoke, and steam and noise, very comfortably located; nor need I say that the engine driver and stoker looked as though they could hardly reckon us up or read out what we were; as for Mrs. ———, she grasped with both hands a piece of elevated plate iron with such firmness as defied all possibility of a tumble, indeed she seemed to say to the dusky conveyance in her very attitude, *Where thou goest I will go*; and while the engine was taking us one way, the wind seemed labouring tremendously to take us another; to this opposition Mrs. ——— presented the hinder part of a good, firm, and *fearless* pair of shoulders.

And so it was, that though we laughed at one another and at our unavoidable adventure most heartily, yet the *Lord took care of us*, and we all came safe to Manchester, and I arose the next morning fresh and lively as a lark, and "pursued with eagerness" the objects of my dearest delights, the mysteries of the kingdom of God.

Nor did I in my last letter mention Charleworth, in Derbyshire; here the place was well filled: the service commenced at eight o'clock, and it was just upon ten when it closed. I preached here only once, but I trust even that once was not in vain. This chapel is situate most pleasantly amidst surrounding hills, and such was the enormous power of their stentorian throats in singing, that they made the old stern-looking (stern

looking to the eye of a southern)—they made these old stern looking Derbyshire hills echo again, and I felt very much at home among the people, as far as I knew them.

Mr. Smith, who had heard me in London, received me most kindly, and made me welcome to his table and his house, and I believe power from on high was with us, that we did not leave our religion at the Chapel, but it went home with us; and so is the promise, "that when thou goest it shall lead thee; when thou sleepest it shall keep thee; and when thou awakest it shall talk with thee," *Prov. 6. 22.*

I scarcely need say that the people of St George's Road, by far the majority thereof,—I do not mean exclusively the members, but the people in general,—treated me, in this my recent visit to Manchester, very kindly, and, with the friends at Oldham Street, contributed most liberally towards my expenses; and one much esteemed (St. George's Road) friend gave me personally a sovereign towards my expenses; in truth, the old system of bigotry and party is so broken up in Manchester, and in some other places, that they are brought more clearly to know that it is not in this mountain, nor at Jerusalem, but in spirit and in truth, that God, who is a Spirit, is to be worshipped.

I had intended this letter to have treated more exclusively of spiritual things, but little things will sometimes amuse little minds, and this must account for my being amused with my own thoughts, which has resulted in the above familiar observations, which observations would from the pulpit be intolerable, but may do no harm in a friendly letter; nor was my last letter to you, as has been mistakenly insinuated, written in a spirit of disrespect to other ministers. I neither had nor have any such feeling; but this I do confess, that there are but very few that I can recognise as ministers of Jesus Christ, and cannot receive a man either as a Christian or as a Minister, unless he stand manifest as such to my conscience.

We are to know them by their fruits; now let us be careful here not to mistake one thing for another, nor blend that into one which God hath made two, nor put that asunder which God hath joined together.

Now then, remember that those fruits essential to prove a man to be a Christian, and the fruits essential to prove a man to be a Minister, are *two distinct things.*

The two things essential to prove our religion to one another, are, conversation and conduct; not the conduct without the conversation, because a man's conduct may be morally fair, while he is utterly unacquainted with any thing spiritual; nor the conversation without the conduct, for a man's conversation may be doctrinally right, while his heart and life are essentially

wrong. We must therefore have both conduct and conversation, we must have them both together: if the *average* of a man's conduct be right; I say the average, for who in this sense is perfect? the brightest stars have their spots, and the best of men are not without their blemishes and faults; still their faults are not their glory; no, they feel them to be their shame, their burden, and their grief; but notwithstanding their infirmities, they pursue most solemnly and most sincerely the paths of mercy and truth, of holiness and righteousness, and as much as by the grace of God lieth in them, denying all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and living righteously and soberly in this present evil world.

But then there must be not only the conduct, but also the *conversation*; for while with the heart man believeth, yet with the mouth confession is made to salvation. Herein will be manifest, more or less, how they came by their religion, and whether they be good ground, or mere stony-ground hearers; by their fruits, namely, conversation and conduct, we are to know them.

And I hesitate not to say, that with all the outcry of whole-hearted, unhumbled professors about Antinomians and Antinomianism, that God, the searcher of all hearts, recognizes, among these so called Antinomians, with all their faults, infinitely more moral worth than in the whole world besides; for the steps they take in the right direction are from the real love of the truth, *not* from the *meagre* feeling of legal duty, but from the love of Christ constraining them.

Here then we have the fruits essential to prove a man to be a Christian.

But perfectly distinct from these are the fruits essential to prove a man to be a minister, a *true* minister of Jesus Christ, and which ministerial fruits may be thus summed up,—*usefulness arising from what he experimentally knows, is living in, and devoted to.*

Now, are there not some who seem worse than useless, running about and bringing little cause after little cause to desolation? had these men abode in their lawful worldly vocations, instead of being tossed about from one place to another, like mendicants from parish to parish, instead of this, they would have been comfortable and respected, and in nine cases out of ten the people are ten times more to blame in this matter than the minister; they are pleased with him just at first, deceive themselves, flatter him, and lay hands on him too suddenly; they first lift him up above his place, and then cast him down, and all but leave him to perish.

Let young men then well ponder the path of their feet before

they leave their lawful avocations to become ministers, for if the step they take should not be of God, they will pierce themselves through with many sorrows, and that to no purpose, except that of their own misery.

But let no one think I am here alluding to those ministers who *are useful*, yet from a variety of causes may sometimes be tossed about from one place to another.

Now, to shew that I do not slight, make little of, or think little of other ministers, I will here state what kind of men I receive as true ministers of Jesus Christ, and I will set them forth under three different circumstances. There are some who do not leave their worldly calling, but still go on with their tent making; these preach, some in stated places, and some as itinerants; their services are desired and sought; sinners by their instrumentality made alive from the dead; the living are fed, refreshed, and strengthened; the instances of conversion in the case of each of these ministers may not be very numerous, nor their congregations very large, still there is a work going on, something is doing: this class of men, both in towns and villages, have done much good, without being at the mercy of capricious hearers, or dictatorial deacons.

Secondly. There are those who have left their worldly calling to give themselves up to the ministry of the word; they wear well, the congregation perhaps not above two or three or four hundred, yet they keep to the point; there is a firm stand made for God and truth; now and then a never dying soul plucked as a brand from the burning, while the blessing of the Lord is in their midst, yea, the Spirit of God and of glory resteth upon them. There may not perhaps be very much noise or shaking among the dry bones, still, notwithstanding old friends departing by death, others removed by providence, and others go away offended yet the minister's usefulness keeps pace with all these drawbacks, and the Lord of hosts is with them still, and the God of Jacob is clearly their refuge. These have done very great good.

Thirdly. Those whose usefulness is open to all whose gifts and usefulness bring them into the midst of large congregations.

All who thus by their ministerial fruits prove themselves to be workmen that need not be ashamed, whether their gifts be humble or more shining, I can and do respect, revere, esteem, and pray for, and ever desire practically to honour.

And is it not a truth, that though there be a few ministers such as I have alluded to, that there are nevertheless thousands of people scattered over the North of England, thirsting for the living ministry of the word, and cannot obtain it; nor have we the one remedy, and that is, *earnest prayer to God* that he would

send out labourers into the harvest, for none but the labourers that he sends will gather in the wheat; men-made and men-sent labourers, gather in nothing but hay, wood, straw, and stubble; they hate the good seed, the children of the kingdom.

The qualifications of a true minister of Jesus Christ are such as none but God can give; those qualifications consist of a broken and a contrite spirit, a soul filled with heavenly treasure, and truth written by the *finger of God* upon the fleshy table of the heart; a judgment set to rights and directed by the Spirit of God; a conscience sprinkled with a Saviour's blood, a mind brought into that light which surpasses the brightness of the sun, a daily sense of the loathsomeness of sin and self, seeking their texts and sermons at a throne of grace, and receiving their message direct from God, that they may preach not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but that they may speak the wisdom of God in a (gospel) mystery, even the hidden wisdom which God before the world was ordained unto their glory, to the end that the faith of the people should stand not in the wisdom of men, but in the *power of God*.

But let ministers be many or few, weak or strong, industrious or idle, exercised much or little unto godliness, yet the Lord knoweth them that are his; and it is your privilege that your *faith and hope are in God*. And how great is the salvation he hath wrought, and by which salvation you are made one with Christ Jesus, and by which salvation and oneness with the Lord of life and glory, God and godliness are endeared to you.

And what evil is there from which salvation does not and will not ultimately and entirely deliver? and that because no evil can either in strength or magnitude be equal to God's salvation; let this salvation shew itself in contact with any one of the evils by which we as sinners were or are held in bondage, and though sin be as it were, deeper than hell, high as heaven, broader than the sea, and longer than the earth, yet is the saving mercy of the Lord from everlasting to everlasting. And though sin has so broadly extended its domain, yet hath grace *much more* abounded; and though it be as high as heaven, yet hath Jesus ascended up far above all heavens, and though sin be deeper than hell, yet hath salvation overturned the mountains of sin by the roots, and hath laid its principalities and powers prostrate in the dust. And so also hath the Saviour proved himself stronger than the curse of the law; he lived until the essence of the curse was dead, and when he had overcome sin, the curse, the enemy, and had destroyed the sting of death, when he had reconciled things in *heaven* by bringing mercy and truth together, and causing righteousness and peace to embrace each other, and when he had reconciled things on earth, that is, when he had fulfilled the law so that the law should not be against the pro-

mises, nor the promises against the law, but that both law and gospel should meet and be established in his love, for love is the fulfilling of the law, and is the end and final object of the gospel,—when the Saviour had thus made peace in heaven, and peace on earth—when he had thus, by his almightiness, overcome all hinderances to the salvation of sinners lost, he had then nothing else left to do but to lay down his natural life, which laying down his natural life was the *mildest* part of the penalty of the law; the most *awful* part of the penalty was from the avenging and flaming sword of justice, Awake, O SWORD, against my Shepherd, against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts; smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered, and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones.

It was then, as it appears to me, in what he endured from the sword of justice, consisted the real substance and terribleness of the penalty of the law, and that his laying down his life *after* he said “It is finished,” solemn as was this part of his suffering, it was the mildest part of what he endured; but that which he endured *before* he said, “It is finished,” would to the Church have been lamentation, mourning, and woe *eternal*. The Saviour therefore did what none but “incarnate God could do.”

If the sentence of the law be death natural, and punishment eternal, then the Saviour, in what he endured, included both parts of the same, taking the *greater first*; here were required all his power as God and man in one person, here he stood alone; of the people, there was none with him, and God the Father also forsook him; as to any manifestation to his manhood, here it is shewn that if Jesus had not been God as well as man, the curse of the law must have taken him away to have returned no more. But he was God as well as man, and therefore not to be moved; feed the church of God (saith the apostle) which he hath purchased with his own blood. No mere man can by any means redeem his brother or give to God a ransom for him, that he should still live for ever and not see corruption, for the redemption of the soul is precious, and for aught mere man can do, it ceaseth for ever; but when this mighty work came into the Saviour's hands, he shewed himself mighty to save, and hath by his own blood obtained eternal redemption.

I again, then, say, that there is no evil from which the salvation of God will not abundantly, entirely, and for ever deliver; it is by the greatness of this salvation that the abundant mercy of God the Father is on our side, never to leave nor forsake us, and this river of mercy is not merely to the ankles, or to the knees, or to the loins, but a river not to be passed over, a river whose waters are healing, cleansing, satiating, and waters to swim in.

And what are we? does not daily experience shew us that we are full of wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores, that the whole head is sick and the whole heart faint, and if the Saviour wash us not we have no part with him; and is it not so that our wounds stink and are corrupt through our foolishness or sin? And who is it but the Lord that healeth us? and have we not had seasons when our hearts have been sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water? what health and cure, what holiness, peace, and happiness in the Lord have we then had? what strength to run the heavenly road, to endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ? How light, then, the heaviest burden, how short the longest road, how smooth the roughest place, how straight the most crooked things become; and what lions' mouths are stopped, and what violent fires are overcome; and how is the Lord unto us as a place of broad rivers and streams wherein are neither convict nor slave ships, for here the Lord is our judge and hath passed sentence on our behalf, saying, "no weapon formed against thee shall prosper, and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment, thou shalt condemn." This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord.

But the Lord is also our law-giver, he hath given to, and rooted in our hearts living laws of separation from the kingdom of Satan, and all pertaining thereto; and of oneness with the kingdom of Christ and all the immunities thereof. The kingdoms of this world must come to nought, but the kingdom of our God is that which *cannot* be destroyed, the Lord being both our King and Saviour; and such is the completeness of his victories for us, that just such poor cripples as are we shall take the prey, and the time is coming when we shall be no longer cripples, nor shall the inhabitant of that heavenly land any more say, I am sick.

Salvation hath abounded unto us, and mercy and grace by that salvation will abound; and what the Holy Spirit is in the testimony of the word, that he will do also in the operation of his power; and whenever we abound in hope, it is by the power of the Holy Ghost.

And, though the sheep be much scattered, yet the hand of the Lord is upon them, claiming them as his own, defending them, guiding them, and feeding them, and gathering them into the promised land, though perhaps by round-about ways and means, yet no one shall perish, not a hoof shall be left behind.

He may, and will, and does shew us hard things by the way, yet will he not forsake us, but will feed us temporally and spiritually; nor shall all our tribulation be able to destroy that

eternal truth, that happy is the people that is in such a case ; yea, happy is the people whose God is the Lord.

And now, the Lord be with you, and with all who visit you in the Lord's name and truth and spirit, to minister among you in holy things ; only let your conversation be such as becometh the gospel of Christ, that whether I come and see you or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind, striving together for the faith of the gospel.

July 16th, 1847, 9, St. Anne Road, Bristol.

ON FAITH.

As faith is no way to be understood so well as by its effect, we cannot do better than trace it in its operations, for as it is a divine principle, emanating from God and taking possession of his beloved family, disposing them to love and serve God with all their hearts and souls, working in them both to will and to do of his own good pleasure ; so it is a grace that human reason can never comprehend, nor fallen nature submit to, nor the will of man embrace, as this faith is the gift of God, *Eph. 2. 8*, and without it it is impossible to please God, for what is not of faith is sin. Thus it appears that without this divine principle we must all live and die without God and without hope in this world, and consequently be condemned as unbelievers ; who then in their right minds would not be concerned to know whether they are entrusted in this first leading and important principle of grace ? seeing that without this there can be no other grace possessed ; this grace is the first evidence of divine life, the source from whence springs every acceptable work. And there is blessing attached to it, such a blessing as, "Blessed is he that believeth, for there shall be a performance of those things spoken of the Lord."

First, This grace is an active principle and embraceth with delight the glorious object presented, even Christ Jesus the Son of God, as the sure and only friend of sinners ; this principle is an holy one, and is called a treasure ; yea, it is the evidence of Christ formed in you, the hope of glory, yea, it is the very life of God in the soul, and never fails to bring the soul it possesseth, sooner or later, to the footstool of divine mercy, imploring acceptance through Jesus. This faith makes and leaves a divine impression on the mind of the certainty of death and the uncertainty of life, the awfulness of sin and consequent condemnation, with a feeling necessity of salvation, and an earnest inquiry and constant search, with a full determination never to give up the pursuit or to let God go, without a blessing.

Secondly, This faith renounceth all human performances, and pleadeth the oath and promises of God, and approacheth Christ as the chiefest of sinners, and pleads nothing but the atonement of Christ for acceptance before God, and his own need as the only condition between God and himself; and thus true faith will teach the sinner to approach Jehovah with humble boldness in the following language, "Lord, hast thou not said that thou wilt save to the very uttermost every sinner that cometh to thee by Jesus Christ? and I acknowledge my delay and utter unworthiness, but I plead thy promise of casting out none, and thou canst not display thy attribute of mercy to one more needy or undeserving, or one that would more gladly praise thee for it." Therefore if it can be consistent with thy holiness to dispense pardon unto such an obstinate and unworthy wretch as I, O God, be merciful to me a sinner, and remember me with that favour thou bearest to thy people.

Thirdly, This faith lives upon the promise of God, waits deliverance and an answer from God; it is called the faith of God's elect, because it is bestowed upon none but them, and it acts in the intermediate space between them and God, it is the coin of the heavenly kingdom that the elect trade with; by this they buy the truth and sell it not, and even to be reproached for this they account greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt.

Fourthly, This faith is the Christian's light and guide in darkness, by this he can see through the darkest dispensations, it is his defence in danger, his support in weakness, his victory over his enemies; by this he holds communion with God and enters into fellowship with the saints, renounceth the devil, rejoiceth in times of trouble; by this he sees the world a delusion, and renounceth her charms, and rejoiceth in Christ Jesus, having no confidence in the flesh. By this divine grace he views death a friendly messenger, the grave a welcome place of rest, and the devil a conquered enemy, and Christ the captain of his salvation; by this he dwells upon the invisibilities of Jehovah, and views him on his right hand, and rests secure upon these everlasting arms; by this he runs through a troop, jumps over a wall, waxes valiant in fight, puts to flight the armies of the aliens. This faith goes out in search of the blessings promised, fully relying on the faithfulness of the promises, and rests assured that though the blessing may seem to tarry, yet it will come in due time and not tarry, and accounts every thing but dung and dross, compared with the excellency of Christ, and is willing to lose all things, rather than his communion with Christ, therefore his first desire is that he may win Christ and be found in him, adorned with his righteousness; by this faith Abraham went out not knowing whither he went, but left his native land;

and Moses left the court of Pharoah, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy all the pleasures and profit of the Egyptian court, and to follow the low capacity of a shepherd rather than be called the son of Pharoah's daughter. Yes, this special grace, under divine operation, dissolves doubts, endures seeing him that is invisible; by this faith Jehosaphat dug the valley full of ditches, when there was no appearance of wind, or rain, or fountain to supply, but the ditches were all filled with water at the appointed time, according to promise. And so shall it be done at all times to the persons whom the king delighteth to honour; thus those that rest in faith have always found even as the Lord hath told them. May it be our happy lot then to feel this spirit of faith and obedience, that in like manner we may meet the approbation of the Lord.

JOHN CORBITT.

“IT IS FINISHED!” *John, xix. 30.*

If so much interest is attached to the dying words of men, how infinitely great an interest must we feel in the dying words of God, especially if we know that we are ourselves the subjects of all his love and care, and the only objects he had in view when, at the closing scene of his victorious battle-life, “Immanuel God with us” cried, “*It is finished!*”

What is finished? How shall we count over the thousand mighty works that Jesus finished at that pivot-moment in the circle of time? How great a sum would the whole compose, “the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written” (*John, xxi. 25*).

Seeing, then, that the field is so wide, and the extent of our ramblings must be confined to a few stray thoughts, we can only pluck here a flower, there a leaf; now a thorn-branch, a thistle, or a bitter herb, and the latter we shall find in abundance at every step. “Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee, and thou shalt eat the herb of the field” (*Gen. iii. 18*).

Our earnest desire is that, of whatever our humble little nosegay may be composed, which from time to time we present to the *living in Jerusalem*, the hyssop may be dipped in the blood of the Lamb, and “the leaves may be for the healing of the nations.”

In the present instance we might form a back-ground from the evergreens of prophecy, interwoven with a cedar branch or two gathered from the law of Sinai, heightened in effect by a bunch of blood-red types from the Mosaic dispensation: all of which were finished when “Jesus bowed his head, and gave

up the ghost." Then select as our choice specimens — the odour-teeming flowers of salvation, redemption, sanctification, justification, and righteousness. Such was not the reading when these words rested on the mind, but the inquiry went out, "What is the cause of the greatest grief suffered by a child of God?" *Sin*. What stands in connection with sin, which produces such constant shrinking and trembling in his poor flesh? *Death*. And who is the great enemy, who sets the world of iniquity and death in motion? The *devil*. The conclusion arose,

"If sin be pardon'd, I'm secure,
Death has no sting beside."

Then came the following glorious portions, like "beds of spices" (*Cant. v. 16*) where every flower of gospel blessedness seemed to blossom first (*Daniel, ix. 24*). "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, *to finish the transgressions, and to make an end of sins*, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the visions and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy." Then (*2 Tim. i. 10*), "made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, *who hath abolished death*, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." And lastly (*Heb. ii. 14, 15*), "Forasmuch, then, as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part in the same; *that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil*; and deliver them who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage." Here were manifested, with much power and clearness, the eternal destruction of the three great powers; so that although daily constrained to groan, cry, and sigh in bitterness of soul on account of the workings of this trinity of hell, oh, wonderful fact!—the Lord enabled us—we now, in our humble measure, read in letters of fire and of blood, on the forehead of each monster, as he comes out of the fight, *It is finished*.

" 'Tis to trust our well-beloved, in his blood has wash'd us clean,
 'Tis to hope our guilt's remov'd, though we feel it rise within;
 To believe that all is finish'd, though so much remains t' endure,
 Find the dangers undiminish'd, yet to hold deliverance sure."

Without making any pretensions to a formal dissertation on the subject, we purpose recording a few thoughts, first on Sin, and the difference between the characters to whom it *is*, and those to whom it is *not* "*finished*," and then add a remark or two on death and the devil. The Lord enable each living reader to set to his seal that it is true, that however much he may be distressed, day by day, with the presence of these three

master evils, yet that the *poison* is destroyed, the *sting* is drawn out, and the power to injure *finally*, is annihilated.

First, *Sin*. What is sin? Hear the word of the Lord (*Rom. xiv. 23*), "*Whatsoever is not of faith is sin.*" What a sweeping testimony! Where now is thy standing? Hast thou faith? If not, though an angel in morality, *all is sin*. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked" (*Gal. 6. 7*). Come, "Behold Boaz winnoweth barley to-night" (*Ruth, 3. 2*). Oh, my fellow-sinners, whoever thou art, though you be established in what you may consider a perfect, a *beautiful* system of religion, what does it all avail, if it be not the work of the Spirit of God? No matter what you may be called by men or yourselves; are you *truly* in earnest? If so, come with us to the winnowing (*Psal. 139. 3, margin*), it will do thee no harm. The wheat may be much tossed, but fear not. If but one remnant of husk be blown away, it is better away; but if much husk still remains in the heap how difficult at times to discern the real grain. The north wind will do much towards "purging his floor" (*Matt. 3. 12*). "Awake then, O north wind, and then come thou, south; blow upon my garden, that the spices may flow out" (*Cant. 4. 16*). Of the works of the flesh, *which are manifest*," as stated in the catalogue, contained in verses 19, 20, 21, of the 5th chapter of Galatians, we need say nothing: all the world agrees that such things are abominable in the sight of God and man, although sometimes even the children of God have to bless him for the first verse of the sixth chapter of this same Epistle to the Galatians. Ah, yes! "Take heed," beloved (*1 Cor. 10. 12*). No matter of what name or creed, every professor of Christianity in the world belongs to one of two classes. The first, to those who are religious in the flesh; the second, to those who are religious in the Spirit, otherwise, those who are "born again." The first are such as were the pharisees of old. And truly to what a marvellous extent is the natural man—the unregenerate man—susceptible of that polish of *piety* which Satan has in all ages compounded and applied to the furniture in his palace, so long as he can keep his goods in peace (*Luke 11. 22*). Let us present you with a picture—a study by a master hand—the portrait of a pharisee, painted by himself. Behold the man—grave, stern, inflexible; cold when contemplative, vigorous when active; measured, sedate, and earnest in devotion; alike sincere in his phrenzied opposition to all who taught other doctrines than those his settled convictions told him were the truth, as he was in his punctilious observance of every jot and tittle of those commands which were sent down from heaven. His religion was his God, and all who refused to fall down and worship the golden image which he had set up, must prepare for a fur-

nace heated seven times hotter than it was wont to be. Now for the picture : " If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more : circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews, as touching the law, a pharisee ; concerning zeal, persecuting the church, touching the righteousness which is in the law, *blameless*" (*Philip* 3. 4, 5, 6) ; " Brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, *and was zealous towards God, as ye are this day*" (*Acts* 22. 3). " That after the most straightest sect of our religion, I lived a pharisee" (*Acts* 26. 5). Was not this man *highly religious* ? Was he not a perfect pattern of all that is excellent in morality ? some may object, he was immoral in his persecution,. Would not the same scenes of mad intolerance prevail in our day, enacted by whichever party happened to be the strongest, if such proceedings were as *fashionable* among us, as they were in the apostle's day ? Doubtless : and could you question such, they would reply, and honestly, " I verily thought with myself, that I *ought* to do many such things," *Acts* 26. 9. Not only was our pharisee highly polished in his religion and morality ; but his religion was based on the commands of the Son of God ; and yet every particle was *sin*—and why ? because he had *not faith*. Oh, man-humiliating fact ! Hence, let us learn, first, that sincerity *in the unregenerate heart* is of no avail ; although an inestimable moral quality, it cannot produce faith, and may and does exist to a great extent where faith is unknown. Learn again, secondly, that Satan's constant and only aim is to deceive all men into a belief that their state before God is safe. Throughout all time he has been, and will ever be, watching the development of the mind and *dispensations* of the Lord, and the moment each *fresh issue* of the golden coin has passed the mint of heaven, the moment each fresh dispensation appears in the church—the cunning forger forms *his* mould, and casts *his* base counterfeits ; but, ah ! so beautifully done that all prefer it to the real gold, until the balances are brought. Oh, what a mercy to have them brought " while it is called to-day ;" for should we reach the shores of Jordan, and find, too late, our passage-money counterfeit, Oh, dreadful thought ! We have hoarded up a lie ! Look well to the image and the superscription ; see that it is true, the first coin the rebel ever forged, contained in the inscription, one little word to many, which ruined all, " compare *Gen.* 2. 17, with *Gen.* 3. 4. Think you, would not Paul have carried his counterfeit to hell if God had not stopped him, as he did, in his career of madness ? Behold, then, the end of all religion void of true faith ; the whole fabric is *sin* ; and, oh, tremendous conclusion, to *all*

such—to those who thus die, sin is *not* finished—death is *not* finished—the devil is *not* finished, but remain in their giant magnitude to crush, torment, horrify, and curse with unutterable dismay, for ever.

Now turn we to another inquiry, we trust nearer home. Beloved, hast thou faith? Why afraid? You cannot see so clearly, and feel so manifestly, as you could wish, the workings of faith? Perhaps you are looking a little beside the mark, and are not yet instructed in the fact that, even in the heaven-born child of God, very much of that which he calls his most holy things is not of faith—therefore *sin*; imitations and substitutions manufactured by Satan and the *old man*. Dwell on the self-crushing fact a moment; and, as we must be brief, we will take but one holy thing—namely, prayer. See yonder wrestler at the mercy-seat; hear the sighings, observe the inward, heart-throbbing earnestness with which he tries to pray; but no, he seems to have brought a dull body, a cold heart, and a wandering mind, to the foot-stool of mercy. “Stay,” says one, “I am not so; I pray always with vigour, or if dull at first, cease not in effort until vigorous and warm, and fixed in purpose and in mind.” We have read a story of two men who once went up at the same time into the temple to pray. One was admirable in his devotion, and well satisfied with his prayer, even thanking God he was not like the sighing, groaning publican yonder, who smote upon his breast, and wept out, “God be merciful to me a sinner.” And yet we read that the latter “went down to his house justified rather than the other,” *Luke*, 18. 9, 14. Had an outward observer been standing by, he would not have drawn such a conclusion; “but God looks at the heart.” As in the case of the publican, so is it with the wrestler we have just introduced. There is a little *faith* mixed with the *heart-sighs*, therefore he goes down justified, because “a man is justified by faith,” *Rom* 3. 28. Not that faith is the *cause*, but the *evidence*, *Heb*. 11. 1, of justification. Take courage, then, poor soul; the Lord hears thy sighs, and though he telleth thy wanderings, he will put thy tears into his bottle, *Psal*. 56. 8, “helping thy infirmities with groanings that cannot be uttered.” By-and-by you will learn that the real prayer which ascends from our heart, “mixed with faith,” is of a very different character to the fleshly parade, which even in the children of God too often fills up their stated devotion seasons.

“Though thought be broken, language lame,
Pray if thou canst, or cannot speak;
But pray with faith in Jesus’ name.”

If, then, there be so much that is *not* of faith, and therefore *sin*, in the *prayer* of those who *have* faith, what shall we say of

our less holy things? Trace back, if you can bring to remembrance the entire passage through the past week—bring all of thought, word, or deed to the touchstone—“*whatever is not of faith is sin.*” How much gold do you find? Alas, alas! at best but here and there a grain. But these things cannot be learned without passing through the furnace; we cannot give up our apparently good prayers and good duties without a struggle; but the burning, time after time, of these nests, in which the flesh would be ever reposing, by degrees brings the living one to deeply feel his need of, earnestly desire, and diligently seek after, a clearer knowledge of the glorious fact, that, although plagued every moment with its baneful workings, yet that sin is not now imputed, *Psal.* 32. 2; for our glorious Redeemer “finished the transgression, and made an end of sin,” *Dan.* 9. 24, when he cried with a loud voice, “It is finished!”

There is, therefore, *now* no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, *Rom.* 8. 1. Beloved, here is the great point of decision. Are you *alive in Christ Jesus*? If you are, one of two states of experience is more or less yours. You are either *intensely anxious* to know the pardon of your sins, and are daily thinking amid a thousand fears that you are in a delusion, and that you will never obtain your soul's desire, which causes you to cry and sigh mightily to God for a manifestation of Jesus Christ as your own Lord and Saviour; or you have passed through a *measure* of this first working of spiritual life, and have had some soul-dissolving views of a precious Christ. You have heard him say, just as the taper of life seemed going out, “I am thy salvation,” or some other gracious word, which, for the time, has made you weep out your spirit on his bosom, and which now you are constantly reminding him of, while passing through the depths of distress within and without, caused by the vile workings of the flesh, the fiery darts of the devil, or the tribulations which the Lord has allotted, the one desire of your soul now being to know more and more of his person and love, who, by the tenderness of his heart towards so black a rebel, has made himself, in the estimation of the once lost, but now broken-hearted sinner, “the chiefest among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely.” Nor can such a one be happy to go a day without some fresh token of the love of his chief Friend. There are, however, winter and summer seasons in this experience, which we shall talk about hereafter. We repeat it, it is to these, and these only, that sin is finished. *Their* debt is paid, and sooner or later, the Holy Spirit shows them the receipt in full; and

“Payment he will not twice demand,
First at my bleeding Surety's hand,
And then again at mine.”

One brief word respecting the debt. How do you calculate your debt? Do you sum up day by day the various items which form the account, and bring down the balance, "writing bitter things" against yourself, *Job*. 13. 26, as though a certain portion of the claim remained unpaid? If so, you reckon on wrong principles. Sins—past, present, and to come, form the charge in the bill, and whether you are a fifty or a five hundred piece debtor, *Luke*, 7. 41, a grand balance, *including all*, was struck on the great pay-day, and not one jot or tittle remained undischarged when "Jesus said, '*It is finished*,' he bowed his head and gave up the Ghost."

" But the bliss
Of it is
Known to us by tasting."

To these *living* ones, and to these alone, death also was abolished when our glorious dying Conqueror cried, "It is finished." "And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death" *Rev.* vi. 8—sin and Death—and "The horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea" *Ex.* xv. 1; "I am the resurrection and the life;" "Blessed are they who have part in the first resurrection, over whom the second death has no power" *Rev.* xx. 6. The heart sustaining comfort, flowing from the mysterious mercy, that death is no longer death to the child of God, *but a sleeping in Jesus* can only be felt in its strengthening effects in our poor unbelieving hearts, as the Lord the Spirit is graciously pleased to give the necessary faith as a channel through which it may flow. We may believe the truth, and yet tremble,—but when the Lord is pleased to whisper in our hearts, "It is finished," death will be at once transformed into Solomon's chariot, paved with love.

We find, however, that in our daily journeyings, a certain kind is ever attending us. How constantly are we feeling its icy damps running over our spiritual frame; how constantly are we busily engaged in a thousand dead works, sometimes even things that are good and approveable in themselves, but which, when taken into the sanctuary to be weighed, come out with the black crest of death—the skull and crossbone—stamped upon them. Ah, beloved, how many of our formal petitions and our attendances on ordinances, come back to us with this mark upon them; nevertheless, *to the living*, "there is hope in Israel concerning this thing." Again—look! it has passed through another office on its way back to us. Read with the eye of faith, the endorsement, "It is finished." Our concluding remarks refer to that Leviathan, who from the moment God in wisdom launched the bark of humanity on the ocean of time, has been going about, seeking whom he may devour. The devil begat

sin,—sin entailed the death. What! the devil finished? and yet such an affinity of his works going on hourly in the wretched dupes who call him Father. No,—to them he is not destroyed. It is only to, and in, the spiritually living part of those who have been made alive from the dead, the wicked one toucheth not, 1 *John*, v. 18. All the rest, like devotees to the Indian Juggernaut, some in open profanity, others wrapped in the toil of philosophy, and multitudes bowing to the earthly constructions of religionists, lay them in the dust, and while the crushing fabric rolls over their prostrate bodies, calling on their gods, they find their waking spirits no longer dreaming but amid the dread realities of death, feel themselves thrust rudely into one abominable cell of death eternal, where delicate, and sumptuously provided, and high born earth worms, sink into one gross and filthy charnel-house, where all that is most offensive in the world of outcasts is their lot, not for a season only; but oh, tremendous thought! Ye pampered ones, who now receive great homage, are you prepared for such a horrid termination to your pretty concert-dream?

But hail dear living trembler, this is not for thee, although the arch fiend tells thee so. Canst thou not trace the pulse of life now beating in thy soul? How? those earnest longings, those intense desires, are life's first movements. Soon shalt thou join our Hallelujah choruses, and sing, Yes, "It is finished."—*Gospel Cottage Lecturer*, No. 2.

GRACE AND ITS EFFECTS.

MY DEARLY BELOVED BROTHER IN THE LORD,—I am much pleased to see in this month's number of the *Ambassador*, an epistle from you to us poor "Strangers and Pilgrims on the earth scattered abroad through the North of England." Ah, brother! it seems you remember us; well, the Lord be praised for it, and may you still be led to remember us at the throne of grace. You say you will (D.V.) give us something more "exclusively spiritual," per *Ambassador*; that's right, brother, we shall (D.V.) look for it in the next number, and may our great teacher to profit enable you to drop into our poor souls occasionally, per *Ambassador*, (or by other means,) such portion of gospel truth as will instruct, edify, comfort, console, and confirm us in our pilgrimage; and redound to the glory of him who is wonderful in counsel and excellent in working. We also remember you, and some little of the lucid and soul-cheering testimonies to the truth as it is in Jesus, you were enabled to give in such vivid succession when here on Monday evening, May 3rd, on which occasion we had a savoury meal indeed, for which

our dear Lord be honoured. You refer to our being "dis-jointed, disunited," &c. Yes, brother, such is the case, and at times I feel these things painful; but it is written in the word, "Ye shall have tribulation," and what is more calculated to cause it than wounds inflicted by brethren? Such conduct caused one of old to cry out, "Had it come from an enemy I could have borne it," *Psa.* 50. 12. Some of us are looked upon as outcasts, and treated as such; we are maligned, abused, and despised, even by them from whom we have reason to expect, and divine authority to demand, better usage. One minister in this vicinity has gone so far as to designate us, (even whole churches) "worldly men," and for what cause? Merely because we like to hear a Paul or Peter, as well as a James or John; and being blessed with the hearing ear, and having hungry and thirsty souls, we would avail ourselves of such privileges whenever we have them, would in all humility claim the right, and urge the propriety, of having our pulpits open for men whom we believe our Lord has raised up qualified and set out with gifts for our edification, as well as to be instrumental in turning poor sinners from darkness to light.

May the Lord in his own time teach our brethren better, and ever keep us from going upon the devil's ground with them; may we remain patient and passive, and may our brethren manifest no more of that carnality mentioned in *Acts*, 1. 12; but may we all love as brethren, 1 *Peter*, 3. 1; may we feel the full weight and enjoy the import of our Lord's answer to Peter recorded by *Matt.* 18. 22, "I say not unto thee until seven times, but until seventy times seven." Again, *John*, 15. 12, "This is my commandment, that ye love one another;" and many more such potent and beautiful passages, together with almost all the 1 *Cor.* 12. I have read and enjoyed the above chapter to day, and see the disgraceful absurdity of the members of our great mystical body murmuring amongst ourselves. Some of us here are so far kept, that being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it; and, Oh, how sweet it is! how blessed are we in these assurances of our Lord's presence enabling us to follow him through evil and through good report; for he when reviled, reviled not again. May we ever follow him wheresoever he goeth. Bless his dear name, he is yet as good as his promise, wherein he said, "And lo, I am with you always." These turmoils, it is true, shake the faith of some, but the Lord is pleased to so much bless and support us, that we can gather another proof that our faith do not stand in any thing less than the power of God. We have, therefore, all joy and peace in believing, can cast our care upon him who careth for us, can pray for them who despitely use us; and say, "Forgive them that

trespass against us;" can look unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith; can say with the Psalmist, "The Lord preserveth his saints." Can go, life and soul, with the apostle, and say, "We know that all things work together for good to them who are the called according to his purpose; can pray for the peace of Jerusalem, though Israel acknowledge us not; and up comes another blessed assurance thrilling through our souls in these words, "We know that we are passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren;" therefore we who are thus blessed have much to be thankful for. But, bless and for ever praise our dear Lord, the more spiritual our worship, the greater our debt to him, therefore we are lost in wonder, and must exclaim, "How little do we know of his greatness, and the infinite beauty of his holiness; may he continue to feed us and lead us, and in his own time take us entirely beyond the roaring of the old lion, and our own corruptions, and place us where the wicked cease from troubling."

May you enjoy much of the Lord's presence and teaching in your own soul, and pour out to your hearers the rich effusion of the great comforter of the Church; may he bless the word, cause it to run and be glorified in the hearts of his people; may his Zion be built up and strengthened in this our day and generation. Although we have all around us much profession, and little possession of real vital godliness, yet, blessed be his dear name, he has not suffered his seed to become quite extinct upon the earth, and we know he will complete his building, will lay on the last stone, then comes the great shout of grace! grace unto it! then commences the great anthem and full chorus to the King of kings and Lord of lords. From yours, unworthily, in faith and patience of Christ's kingdom,

July 19, 1847.

EZRA.

CELESTIAL FRUIT.

(Continued from page 166.)

I know not that any of the fragrant fruit growing on this lovely Tree of Life can be obtained on any other condition than the above; but on that, I do know no petitioner is to be refused the benefit for which he so earnestly petitions. In this way, thousands and millions of poor prodigals have petitioned and received the favour implored; and for the same have been thankful and humble, and in future they have walked worthy of him who called them to his kingdom and glory.

Some petitioners, however, have had to wait a long time before their grievances have been redressed, or their wants supplied; and while waiting at wisdom's gate, many have been their fears, and great their alarm, and vehement their struggles,

and painful their feelings, and loud their cries for deliverance : and at last, mercy from the hill of frankincense has been sent to rescue them from all the difficulties they were in, and the ruin which they so much feared. And surely no one can well tell what a radical change for the better has been effected in the minds of these poor petitioners by the interference of divine mercy on their behalf. They have sung the high praises of the Lord all day long, and told of his wonderful works in cheerful strains, and gone " forth in the dances of them that make merry "—*Jer.* 31. 4.

But we observe again.—The fruit of this Tree emits a fragrance which far surpasses all other fruits known and made use of by the sons and daughters of men ; and the same has produced more happy and important results among the human family than all the rich perfumes and sweet spices of India has ever produced : and this too has been the case in all ages of the world, and from time immemorial, and the same is true to this day. And it is not only true that it is thus efficacious and healing in its nature ; but it also has, even from generation to generation, retained all that native, or oriental virtue which it always possessed : it has undergone no augmentation nor diminution ; for as at the beginning it was celestial fruit, just so it is now. And every part of this delicious fruit, even from the root to the uppermost bough thereof, yields the same royal dainties ; and all nations of poor and needy mortals are welcome to partake of the same, irrespective of worth or worthiness in and of themselves ; a sense of their own ruined and helpless condition being all the recommendation required in this case, and at this place. Also all people, even from the monarch on the throne to the beggar on the dunghill, that partake of this celestial fruit, are alike constrained to speak in the praise of it, and freely to acknowledge its divine efficacy, both in the remission of sins and in the salvation of the soul.

No complaint, however deeply seated, nor disease, however obstinate, has ever been known to baffle the power and efficacy of this extraordinary fruit ; it heals effectually whenever, or wherever it is applied, and also produces the best feelings in the heart of every patient that it restores ; and both the Tree and the fruit have been the admired theme of all true Israelites through successive ages. This fragrant fruit whenever partaken of by men, always produces two opposite effects ; i. e. while on one hand it humbles the patient in the dust ; on the other hand it is sure to exalt the Physician to the sky ; and this wonderful phenomenon has frequently been talked of by sound-hearted men in quite a lofty strain, and in a pleasing tone, for they have admired the double effect of one and the same cause.

There is yet another special trait in the character of this celestial fruit, to wit, it is equally as mature and efficacious in one climate as in another; and all people who partake of it, alike speak well of it, and of the Tree from whence they pluck it. But why the number of those who are brought to partake of it should be so diminutive as now it is, and always was, we will here say nothing about; but of a truth it is so, namely, that, efficacious as this fruit is; and notwithstanding the many cures it has wrought, and the innumerable wonders it has performed; yet even to this day most people lightly esteem it, and count it but a small matter; and what an incontestable proof is this of the depravity of poor human nature, and the darkness and torpitude of the mind of man.

Now although these things are so, and so we know they are; yet we must believe, and also rejoice in the belief, that the fragrant fruit on the Tree of Life hath in it a sufficiency of virtue to save to the uttermost all poor sin-sick people who are returning to the Shepherd and Bishop of their souls; which most blessed Shepherd and Bishop is very illustriously set forth before us under many notable figures, types, emblems and similitudes, in the written word; and, as before observed, among the rest, the Holy Ghost presents him to us in the Song of Solomon under the lovely emblem of an apple-tree. And surely from so fair a looking object, we can pluck some celestial fruit by which we may be made to thrive and grow as the lily, and cast forth our roots as Lebanon. No tree upon earth for worth and beauty and durability can once be compared with this mystical Apple-Tree. All divine and human beauties and perfections meet and shine here to signal advantage. Yes, they shine so resplendent, that they adorn and dignify the whole Church. Unnumbered millions of reedeemd souls have looked on this fair Tree of Life with so much inward delight and pleasure, that they have been lost in blissful amazement at what they have seen. And as to the full amount of real benefit that has from time to time been received from the same source is altogether unspeakable. A Gabriel's tongue would fail to give the sum-total!

In the mystical Apple-Tree, poor needy sinners and sin-sick people, find a refuge from the deluge of divine wrath, and a good home for their trembling souls, and a friend that sticketh closer than a brother, and a husband that hateth putting away, and a father that will never leave nor forsake his children. Surely then, this must be the Tree of Life sent down from heaven, that through him, sinners impoverished and undone might live,—for ever live. Also, he must be the glory of heaven,—the light of Zion,—the life of saints,—the scorn of

wicked men,—the reproach of infidels, and the dread of devils.

(To be continued.)

ENQUIRY.

DEAR SIR,—Will you, or one of your correspondents, give an answer to the following question? At a prayer, or a church meeting, is it consistent for one of the deacons, in the absence of the minister, when reading the word of God, to make any remarks as he may be led out to do? The same may apply to any members of the church. And it appears some view it as a privilege belonging to the minister only. Not being able to decide in my own mind, I remain neutral, rather than oppose or sanction, by my vote, contrary to the word of truth.

With Christian affection, I am, Sir, yours, &c.,

July 17, 1847.

B. W.

ANSWER TO THE ABOVE.

Simple as is the above question, it touches upon a subject which has been the cause of a great deal of contention in many churches; and though there be nothing *directly* unscriptural in any remarks made by a deacon or member upon a chapter as above stated, yet there may be something *indirectly* unscriptural.

If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; let him speak that which God has taught him, that which he experimentally knows, that which he has tasted and handled of the word of life. We do not see that a Christian man can be wrong in this; but though he may not be wrong, as to matter, expression, and manner, yet he may be wrong as to *place, time, and circumstances*.

Just think for a moment of the *object* of a prayer meeting. The object of a prayer meeting is to seek the presence and blessing of the Lord upon themselves, and upon others, as also to edify and help each other along in the paths of truth and peace.

Now, if all things should be done in order, if God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, then whatever tends to lessen the profit or interrupt the good order and peace of a prayer meeting, ought as much as possible to be avoided. If, therefore, a deacon or member taking the lead in the prayer meeting occupy a portion of the time by comments on the chapter, in *opposition* to the wish of a part of the members and Christian friends present, the same members and Christian friends present finding it tedious and unprofitable to listen, then in this case we pronounce such speaking wrongly timed and out of order; and for any man, deacon or not, a deacon, to persist in speaking

under such circumstances, goes to shew that he is more in love with his own talking than he is with the peace and good of his brethren ; and if such would shew that they have either honesty in their hearts, or the fear of God in exercise before their eyes, they would leave the prayer meeting to take that course which is most in accordance with the wish and most conducive to the good of those who attend the prayer meeting.

Unanimity, order, peace, and profit, appear to us to be the rules by which the propriety or impropriety of comment on a chapter at a prayer meeting is to be judged.

If the persons in general who attend the prayer meeting be upon the whole profited by comments on the chapter, they will request the same to continue ; and if they do not profit, but feel it rather an annoyance than not, then in this case they have a right to reject the same.

And although we can see that several objections may be made to this our way of dealing with this matter, yet no one of those objections has any real *force*.

The most forcible is this, "That if some be greatly profited and wish the commenting on the chapter to continue, are their souls to be robbed because the others cannot mix faith with what they hear?"

To this it may be replied, that there are plenty of opportunities for those who are so profited to meet and hear the speaker by whom they are so profited, without breaking the peace and order of the prayer meeting, and putting others to the torture while they themselves are so profited.

We therefore give it as our opinion, that when any comments on the chapter read at a prayer meeting conduce to the good of the people, to the peace and order and object of the meeting, and tend not to divide but to strengthen and unite the people, that then it is not unscriptural, because it produces no confusion.

But all comments, long prayers, tedious repetitions, and all that tends to make the meeting unprofitable, is *unscriptural*, for living souls cannot be satisfied with dead works, nor with dead prayers, nor with dead forms, nor with anything which does not demonstrate the living powers of grace in the soul, and bring and lead to that living water which flows from the living rock, and feeds with that living bread which endureth to everlasting life.

Dead times and seasons, both with and apart from the ordinances, they have, but they cannot be *satisfied* to be dead ; no, nothing but the life of God and godliness can be to them what they want ; they know that to be carnally-minded is death, they know also that to be spiritually-minded is life and peace.

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"Blessed are the poor in Spirit, for their's is the kingdom of Heaven," *Mat. v. 3*

"The Election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded," *Rom. xi. 7.*

No. 9.

SEPTEMBER 1, 1847.

Price 2d.

TRIBULATION.

"In the world ye shall have tribulation," *John xvi. 33.*

"Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me,—when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy. Who shut up the sea with doors, when I made the cloud the garment thereof, and thick darkness a swaddling band for it, and brake up for it *my decreed place*, and set bars, and doors, and said, Hitherto *shalt* thou come, but no further, and here *shall* thy proud waves be stayed?" *Job xxxviii. 3—11.* Beloved, hast thou ever heard one of Jehovah's immutable *shall's* sound with its all-controlling power through the regions of thy soul? How does the blessed word of God teem with them, yet how little understood! "In the world ye *shall* have tribulation." Ah, yes, however you may strive against it—however much you may endeavour to alter your circumstances—however much you may complain or rebel—however much you may beseech the Lord to remove your distresses—however much you may labour to extricate yourself by human prudence; yet if you are partakers of the *honey* at one end of the rod, you *shall* have continual tastes of the *gall* at the other end; if *in Him* ye have peace, "yet *in the world* ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer," says our glorious Jesus, "I have overcome the world." Oh that the Lord, the Spirit, may, by his gracious instruction, seal the immortal fact on the hearts of every tribulated believer who reads these feeble breathings, that when Jesus Christ achieved that mighty conquest, when he overcame the world, he did it as Moses divided the Red Sea, not *for his own benefit*, but that Israel might go

over dryshod. In all he did, in all he suffered, and in all he obtained, it was, in fact thyself, poor helpless sinner, doing all, suffering all, obtaining all, *as* his wife (*Eph. v. 23—32*) in his person, as much as though thyself had been going about the earth as he did “overcoming the world,” and “fulfilling all righteousness,” so that now, although thou art nearly squeezed to death by the press through which thou art obliged to pass in thy passage through this world towards him, yet not a single thing, which is apparently obstructing thy onward progress, has a grain of power to stop thee; for thyself, helpless as thou art, even thyself, “art more than conqueror *through him* who loved thee,” *Rom. viii. 37*. These are great and blessed facts, the truth of which, *in their power*, can be learned but in one school—that is, in the school of adversity. The Holy Spirit is the teacher, but *necessity* is the drill-master, who brings us into training to submit to the Spirit’s tuition; therefore, *of necessity*, “in the world ye *shall* have tribulation.” Many and great are the mistakes the children of God make respecting their troubles, forgetting that the declaration must be fulfilled day by day, throughout the whole of their sojourn in the “valley of Achor,” and their temporary residence in the trouble valley begins when they are born again from above, and continues until the Master of the great feast comes and whispers the welcome invitation, “Friend, go up higher,” *Luke xiv. 10*. One supposes that some change in his outward circumstances would free him from such continual sorrow. Another vainly thinks that, could he attain to a certain longed-for position, which would admit of more quiet, more reading, more time for meditation and prayer, there would be a corresponding increase of “growth in grace:” while another is moodily putting down to this person or that circumstance, the effect, perhaps, of his own indiscretion, the *blame* of present distresses. Beloved, it is all wrongly calculated. “Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall to the ground (or as good old Tyndall in his translation has it, “And none of them doth *lyght* on the gronde” to pick up its food) without your Father. But the hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not, therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows,” *Matt. x. 29—31*. Ye are “the Lord’s jewels,” or as the margin reads, “special treasures,” *Mal. iii. 17*. Thou art in the hands of the great Lapidary. Wouldst thou go into the king’s crown, rough and uncouth as thou art by nature, because the whirling of the trouble-wheel so affrights thee? Fear not. He knows thy value; he sees thee even now as thou wilt appear when reposing in his crown of gold, reflecting in radiant rainbow-hues his inexpressible glory; and every tribulation, great or small, is all dealt out to thee in daily portions

by weight and measure; and although the road be very rough and very full of thorns, still fear not; the Lord Jesus has printed LOVE upon all we meet: "and lest any hurt it," he has said, "I, the Lord, do keep it night and day" (*Isa. xxvii. 3*); and more, "Thy shoes shall be iron and brass; and as thy days so shall thy strength be," *Deut. xxxiii. 25*. To-day, walking for a moment in our own strength, if we may use such a phrase, we sink under an ounce—to-morrow, with a *single eye* fixed upon Jesus, we go joyfully on our way with a ton weight upon our shoulders, singing, "I can do all things through Christ strengthening me." Rest assured that it is our blessed Lord Jesus, in pure love and unerring wisdom, *orders all*—that we may know that *out of Christ all is war—in him all is peace*.

Ah yes, we can hear the half-suppressed sigh bursting from the trouble riven heart of many an oppressed one; we know too well the language, "But if the Lord would do this, remove that, bring into such and such a position, how would I bless him for his mercy, and with what cheerful feet should I "run the way of his commandments." Beloved, you are forgetting the bitter feelings you experienced on account of your ingratitude some time since, when a certain great mercy was bestowed on you for which you had been pleading so long and so eagerly. Do you not remember how deeply grieved you were, that your heart should remain so unaffected by the accomplishment of that most earnest of your desires? Methinks I hear your "Truth indeed! I am an ungrateful worm;" but the mind runs over a circle of the brethren and sisters whom the Lord seems to have placed in positions far more pleasant than yours, you think they are going by a much smoother road than yourself. Ah, beloved, how great the mistake! "If children, then heirs," heirs to all the promises, not to the exclusion of that hourly fulfilling one, "In the world ye *shall* have tribulation." What! doubt whether all have such acute sufferings as you are called to pass through? Come, then, let us enquire of each individually: you will find every one with his sorrow-cup *full*; and although the ingredients which form the mixture may totally differ in each, yet *taste and see*, the *bitterness* is alike complete in all.

Come with us, first, then, into yonder union workhouse, where I will show you a scene, and, if the dear saint's harp is in tune to-day, let us hear some strains, which none ever reach but those who have "done business in deep waters," *Psa. cvii. 23*: and here you may learn the *design* the Lord has in causing his children to pass through so many fires and floods, while it will appear also, that the deeper they sink the higher they rise. The Lord never gives great faith to sustain the soul in little troubles;

therefore beware, if your heart is set on becoming great in faith, expect a seven times heated furnace, or a descent to the bottom of the mountains, with the weeds wrapped about the head, *Jonah ii. 5*. But come in quietly—stoop down—listen; her voice is too weak to enable her to speak loudly. She begins, “Ah my friend, you were right. He came again last night, and gave me ‘songs in the night.’” I was low when you lift me, yet still at the bottom of my heart I knew all was right. But my precious Lord Jesus has indulged me so much of late, that he has almost spoiled me. If he stays away long, I begin to feel a little jealous, although I know that he loves me as much when he is hiding himself as when he is telling me of his love and faithfulness, and counting over to me the riches he has in store for me, and showing me his hands and his feet, and my name engraved on the palm of his hands. Oh, my friend, what a precious word he whispered into my ear in the night. When he came, I began to tell him about the vile suggestions my wicked heart had been listening to respecting his dear self, and how I had been trying to baffle the enemy by telling him of the blood of Jesus Christ, and the unchangeable nature of his love, and the effect of the mention of his name, how Satan staggered, and was unable to stand his ground, and how I saw him slink away the moment the savour of the presence of the Lord was manifested on my feeble frame; but he stopped me in the midst of my tale by saying, “Rejoice not that the Spirits are subjected unto you, but rather rejoice that your name is written in heaven.” How did my heart burn as he told over the words! Oh, my friend, the freedom a poor sinner can use with the glorious King of Glory, at such seasons, no language can ever express; and could it be heard by a stranger to the secret, they would call it madness or presumption; but he renders himself so unutterably precious during such seasons, that did he not withdraw himself now and then we should not want—indeed, we could not have—a better heaven. However, he did not tarry much longer, but when he went away, he left that golden nail fastened in a *sure place* by the Master of assemblies—*Isa. xxiii. 24*—I mean, the precious word he spoke to me. I have been hanging on it, like a little cup full of bliss, ever since. “But rather rejoice that your names are written in heaven.” Oh, my friend, who wrote my worthless name there? God the Father. And when was it written? Before all worlds. Then add to this glorious truth what our Lord Jesus says, “The Father who gave them me is greater than all, and none can pluck them out of my Father’s hands. I and my Father are one” (*Jno. x. 29*); and then we must go on another step. ‘*I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one;*’ so that the glorious, holy Trinity is

Unity, and the poor, little, insignificant worm, Jacob, is now, and has ever been, in mysterious but perfect oneness. My dear friend, the thought is too mighty to be held by mortal hearts; but, marvellous circumstance! not too great to be true. Oh, dwell upon it—you cannot do so too much.

“That worms of earth should ever be
One with incarnate Deity.”

“Wonder, oh, heavens!” The speaker pauses. Mention her afflictions to her. “Affliction, Sir! What are they compared to these glories I am feeding on—these *light* afflictions, which are but for a moment, *worketh for us* a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, *while we look* not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal, 2 Cor. iv 17, 18. Take particular notice, Sir, of the key-stone of this triumphal arch, ‘*while we look*,’ ‘looking unto Jesus,’ whom having not seen we love, and though we see him not, yet believing, we rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory. My dear friend, is it not so? If we leave off looking unto ‘Him who is invisible,’ that moment the flesh prevails, as in the days of Moses; the moment his hands fell, Israel turned before the face of Amalek; and when we find our eyes begin to waver, and become unstable, oh, let us call to our blessed Aaron to come to our help, and fear not you will find him ‘a God at hand, and not far off.’ Affliction, Sir! Could I have all I once had, and lose one single ray of his glory, it would be bartering diamonds for sand. Indeed, if I had them now I know not what I should do with them. My record is on high—my witness is in heaven, and there my conversation too. I can take no pleasure here.

“There’s no such thing as pleasure here;
My Jesus is my all;
As he doth shine or disappear,
My pleasures rise or fall.

“Come, shed thy sa’vour o’er my frame,
No sweetness half so sweet;
Till I get up to sing thy name,
Where all thy singers meet.”

She pauses again, exhausted. Now bid her adieu. This was once a wealthy lady, ruined by the extravagance of an abandoned husband who is now dead, and her few remaining relations totally discard her on account of her singular religious notions. Say, could she have arrived at the blessed position she now occupies in the spiritual race, if she had not had the flesh literally crushed beneath afflictions of all kinds?

Now, how stands the case? are your tribulations equal to

hers? ah, no. The Lord help thee, then, to be content with such things as ye have.

Having dwelt longer than we intended on our beloved work-house sister, let us take a far different excursion. We will visit a lady "who knows the joyful sound," but finds the pathway, though decked with earthly roses and carpeted with moss, cheered by all that a tender heart can desire in friendship's sympathy, and affection's caresses, yet at each step a demon starts from every hedge-break, and fluttering round a trembling spirit, tells her sad tales of horror and distress awaiting her. Tells her of ruin to her loved ones; tells her of sickness coming here, of death approaching there; paints on her mind a panorama of the future, like a great smoking mass of misery and sorrow, inter-spread confusedly with a thousand disappointments, ruined hopes, and here and there a dismal wreck of fortunes, now sailing proudly on. Poor lady! how she trembles, how her agitated bosom heaves; how quick her throbbing pulse and palpitating heart; and when she weeps she brushes fitfully away the burning tear, and hysterically sinks beneath the imagined tribulations of her soul. Among her friends, some chide,—some coldly tell her she should strive against such fancies. Alas! how little do they know the sad realities of soul distress attending such afflictions. But others, knowing better what alone can still the mental storm, will kindly point to Him who is our *peace*, and manages the whole, and sometimes have I, in a moment, seen the clouds disperse, the troubled brow grow calm, the quivering lip assume its firmness, the tumult of the soul find vent in two or three good hearty sighs, and then a sweet confession settle all. "Well," she says, "after all, I know that Jesus reigns, and nothing can in anywise disturb his plans; and all his plans were formed in love; and though we are afflicted day by day, all is according to His purpose and his will;" and then, in the fulness of her heart, and with the freshness of her sufferings in her *nervous* fit still vividly in view, will she exclaim,

"How harsh so ere the way,
Dear Saviour, still lead on,
Nor leave me till I say,
Father, thy will be done.
At most, we do but taste the cup,
For thou alone couldst drink it up."

But come, let us enter her pretty house, see how studiously everything is arranged. I fear the dear lady is cumbered about many things, which although we may admire for order and neatness, yet are productive of much care and frequent vexations. But she comes to welcome us. "What! that happy good-looking woman, the subject of all those sad and gloomy dis-

tresses you have been telling me?" Yes. How deceitful is a happy-looking face! how often does it cover the canker-worm of sorrow, which alone can be detected by those who have access to the heart. If you would give worlds for a story from herself like that I have just related, she could not tell it; but depend upon this, there is more real soul-anguish springing out of those sorrows we cannot tell another, than there is in the deepest afflictions which are outwardly visible to all. However, we will say but a few words to our friend, lest she suffer from excitement of conversation. Well, dear madam, you know my salutation, "Saw you Him whom my soul loveth? Have you seen our chief friend since we last met?" "Oh, yes, he is very kind to me. I was thinking only last night, after one of my sinking fits,—and although I am ashamed to confess it, yet you know they are frequently occurring,—that he seems to do with me as he did with the disciples of old, he starts me off morning by morning, and night by night, in a little ship by myself, while he tarries behind." "Ah, yes, dear madam, he tarries behind, but for what purpose? *to pray*; and for whom? I will pray the Father *for you*, and he shall send you another comforter, and I know that my Father heareth me *always*. But I interrupted you." "Well, I seem to watch him a little, at first to know that He has sent me away, but after gliding along for a short time, and when he is out of sight, I begin to busy myself about the tacklings of my little ship,—I seem to regard each fresh circumstance which arises in my voyage, as a fresh ship into which the Lord puts me and drifts me off on the ocean of time,—I look anxiously for my compass and find it at hand; I set sail, and for a little time seem to move on nicely; but always before I get far, either a thunder-storm, a tempest of hail and wind, a dense fog, or a dead calm, comes over, and I am at my wit's end in a moment. Now, I know I am not singular in this respect, for I am convinced all the Lord's disciples are subject to the same, but my difficulty is, when the distress comes on, I lose all presence of mind, so to speak; the dear Lord has told me plainly I shall meet with this, but has said, 'Call upon me in the time of trouble, I will deliver thee;' and a hundred other words to the same effect, but when the hour of need comes I forget every lesson, and can do nothing but weep and look out, and cry with a little internal voice which can seldom get so far as words, 'Help, Lord, help, Lord!'" "Well, dear madam, do you not regard that as calling on the Lord in the day of trouble?" "Not as I want to call on him." "No, you want to send up a prayer that the flesh will approve of. Still he always comes, does he not?" "Why, yes, *hitherto* He has, and now that I am free from the storm a little, I hope and think he

always will, when he is most needed; but here is my grief,—I know that in perhaps an hour hence, I shall lose sight of all, and question all.” “Well, dear madam, that is the way the Lord fulfils his promise in your particular case. ‘In the world you shall have tribulation,’ and his *design* is that you should come to him as a truly poor helpless sinner, saying in solemn heart-feeling,

“Other refuge have I none,
Hangs my helpless soul on thee.”

And I rejoice to trace the same simple feature throughout the whole family, whether their afflictions are in mind, body, or estate, that they are brought to the same blessed point to put their mouths in the dust, and say,

“Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to thy cross I cling.”

“Dear madam, ‘The Lord increase thy faith.’ Farewell;” and, as our paper is full, we must say to our readers, Farewell in the Lord, purposing if he will, to resume our visits in our next Amen.—*Cottage Lecturer.*

LETTER TO A FRIEND.

MY DEAR SISTER IN CHRISTIAN LOVE AND AFFECTION,—Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth them out of them all; it matters not what their troubles, or sorrows, or temptations, or trials may be, he has promised to deliver them out of them all, and that with every temptation he will make a way of escape. And though these things seem hard for flesh and blood to bear, it seems to us many times as though the Lord’s hand was stretched out against us more than for us, yet he has said in his holy word, that he will bring the third part through the fire; bless his dear name, he will not leave them in it. No; but he will bring them through it, and he will purify them as silver is purified, and he will try them as gold is tried, and he says, they shall call upon my name. Not, they may call, or perhaps they will. No; but you see there is the positive declaration, and who can alter it? God has put it there, and not man or devil can hinder him; has not the potter power over the clay? to make one vessel to honour, and another to dishonour; shall the thing formed say unto him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Has he not a right to dispose of his vessels as he pleases? and though it appears to us as though he favoured one more than another with his blessed presence, yet in all these things may we be enabled to resign to his blessed will, for you may depend, my dear Sister,

that it is one of the sweetest privileges we can enjoy when we are enabled to look to the Lord, to lie passive in his hands, and to know no will but his. Oh! my dear Sister, there have been times when I have had such a thought as this in my mind, but not to my credit when I say it, but more to my shame: I have thought sometimes that if the Lord had done such and such things, so and so would not have happened; and if he had not suffered this, that, and the other to have taken place, so and so would have been a great deal better, shewing what an ignorant state I must have been in. But, bless his dear name, he seeth my weakness, he knoweth my frame, and he remembereth that I am but dust. May the Lord, my dear Sister, enable you to cease from man, whose breath is in his nostrils, and may he keep you looking unto himself as your only hope, for he that has begun the good work in your soul, will assuredly carry it on unto the day of Jesus Christ. Oh, say you, if I could but say the work was begun, perhaps then I should be able with a little more confidence to say, that it would be carried on. What! and can you say that nothing but Jesus will do for you? that he is your only hope in life, and through death, and to all eternity, and that you would not do, or say any thing the least detrimental to his blessed truth, and that you wish to be guided by him, to be upheld by him, to be taught by his blessed Spirit, and that you really are poor in spirit? What! say all this and yet feel afraid the work is not begun? why, my dear Sister, if you have this living testimony in your soul, you are as safe as those that are now in glory; for I am as sure as I am of my own existence, that the soul that has only one desire in his heart after Jesus, is as safe as those that are now in glory, because none but his own people ever will desire him, though they will not believe that they are. I feel, my dear Sister, nothing but the living testimony of God in my soul will satisfy me, and the Spirit bearing witness with my spirit, that I am a child of God; but with all my doubts and fears there are at times when I feel a little hope spring up in my mind that he will at last own my worthless name before his Father's face, and in the new Jerusalem appoint my soul a place. Oh! my dear Sister, we only want a little of his dear and blessed presence, and how soon then are mountains turned into mole hills; then it is we can run through a troop of doubts and fears, yea, as Mr. Warburton said on Sunday, it makes an empty cupboard all of a glorious gloss; and I think David had a little of this with him when he said, "My mountain standeth strong, I shall never be moved." But in another place he says, "Thou hidest thy face, then I am troubled." No one knows what the hiding of his countenance is but those that go through it; and when the dear Lord was about to leave the disciples he said,

"Sorrow hath filled your hearts." And well it might at the leaving of such a dear and blessed friend as this. Oh! if the world did but Jesus know, sure the whole earth would love him too. Yes, my dear Sister, his smiling face can cheer this dungeon where we dwell—'tis paradise when he is here, if he depart, 'tis hell. May the blessed spirit of all truth teach us to look well to our steps, and enable us to feel more and more the importance of entering in at the straight gate, for, my dear Sister, there are so many gates representing the straight gate, and after all they prove to be of man's invention. Oh! what a mercy when we are enabled to discern these from that house that is not made with hands eternal in the heavens; feeling my need of this, has led me to embrace the rock for want of a shelter, and you may depend, my dear Sister, that every thing short of this will leave us not so much as a word to say before the bar of a holy, just, and righteous God. There are many ministers that appear as God's ministers, but they are nothing more than wolves in sheep's clothing; of such the dear Lord says, beware. Oh, what a mercy when we are enabled to try the spirits, and see whether they are of God; and a much greater mercy when we are enabled to examine ourselves and see whether we are in the faith. Oh, to be interested in these solemn and blessed realities, to me is worth a million worlds; well, then, can he have taught us to trust in his name, and thus far have brought us to put us to shame? never, bless his dear and precious name. May the Lord then help us against our unbelief and give us grace to trust him, for he is faithful that promised, whether we believe or not.

"The sacred truths his lips pronounce,
Shall firm as heaven endure;
And if he speak a promise once,
The eternal grace is sure."

Talk to me about patching up some of my creature holiness to appear in before the bar of him who is perfect holiness: why I have not so much as the least particle of a shadow of holiness to call my own, all my comeliness is turned into corruption. There was a time when I thought I was as holy as the rest of the people, but now I feel as though I could esteem every one better than myself; and however the Lord's dear people can take such notice of a poor crawling lump of sin and iniquity, I cannot think: and a greater wonder, however the Lord could have taken notice of me (if I do belong to him), what could he have seen in me—truly, truly, it was not for good deeds, good tempers or frames; but from grace it proceeds, and all is the Lamb's. May the Lord enable us to loathe ourselves more and more in our own sight, for the more we look to ourselves, the farther we are off from God. And may he keep us asking our

way to Zion, with our faces thitherward ; and though it appears sometimes as though his hand was shut against us, and we feel sometimes ready to cry out with one of old, " He shutteth out my prayers, he hedgeth up my way that I cannot get out, and he appears to be more for our enemies than he does for us ;" yet, bless his dear and precious name, he is behind the cloud, and though it may appear to hang very heavy, and look very black, and there seems not so much as a glimmering hope to be seen, yet by and by he will disperse the cloud and then we shall see him whom I trust our soul loveth, and then we shall be able to see that every thing has been working together for our good, and for the glory of him, who hath done such great things for us. May he keep us decided for his blessed truth, and favour us with a little of his blessed presence while travelling through this waste howling wilderness, and at last give us a triumphant entrance into his heavenly kingdom, to go no more out for ever ; there shall we see his face, and never, never sin ; there from the rivers of his grace drink endless pleasures in, is the sincere breathings of a poor worm.

S. S.

CELESTIAL FRUIT.

(Continued from page 191.)

The sufferings and death of this much to be adored Apple-Tree yield an abundance of celestial fruit ; and so likewise does his resurrection ; and the same is true of his intercession and advocacy, and the scent of it all is known and felt throughout the Zion of God, and it makes glad sorrowful souls, and cheers gloomy minds, and confirms feeble knees, and lifts up the hands which hang down. All the roots and boughs of this fair Tree of Life are full of rich and fragrant fruit all through the year, and of the same the saints partake largely. " Eat, O friends ; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved," *Song*, 5. 1.

Happy ! yes, thrice happy is that man who plucks fruit from this most blessed Tree. The soul by feeding on this fruit pretty freely, necessarily expands and takes enlarged views of spiritual objects and subjects ; and while gazing attentively on the thing of its admiration, things of a sordid nature sink in its estimation and the mystical Apple-Tree becomes all in all. Also, men are always in the best mood for praising God when feeding on this celestial fruit. Indeed men in every department of divine worship must needs be poor drones without more or less of the fragrance issuing from this sweet fruit. And we likewise know that men while in a state of nature have no sweet relish for the fruit which grows on the Tree of Life. Other trees there are, and laden with fruit too, trees which grow in the garden of

nature, and the fruit of them well suits the carnal appetite ; and hence, after these trees and fruit most men eagerly pursue, and in so doing they pass by the mystical Apple-Tree and the celestial fruit. Here we see the folly of men, and in this folly, as in a secret casket, lies their ruin. "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself," *Hosea*, 13. 9. From this text we find that man wrought his own destruction. This indeed was a sad catastrophe, and the whole human family is involved in the same. Alas, alas, what ruin is here ! Man wrought sin, and sin wrought death. But we can but here admire divine clemency, for soon after sin appeared, mercy was heard to say, *The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head*. Yes, the remedy was provided before the disease took place ; and this remedy is found in our mystical Apple-Tree.

But we observe farther.—Man of his own choice, at least he was not urged, pushed, incited, or any way influenced by heaven, or by any of its counsels, purposes, decrees, or designs ; but he in a voluntary way violated the holy law, and injured divine justice, and insulted the Most High, and aroused his wrath : and thus according to the tenor of the covenant of works he exposed himself to all the dreadful maledictions contained in that law which he transgressed, and thereby left himself without the least glimmer, or possible ground of hope whereby he could restore himself from the lapsed condition in which he had placed himself by transgression. Thus the matter stood when first the holy law was violated. Good God ! what a fearful pall is now spread over all mankind ; and how can this fatal event be remedied ? What a serious question is the above, and at what a very eventful period are we now arrived. If man himself has not laid an interdict by which he forever is prevented returning to God in his own strength, or through the medium of that law which he violated, the offended majesty of heaven hath done it, and so done it too that it will never be undone. And here stands the inflexible interdict. "So he drove out the man ; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life," *Gen.* 3. 24.

And thus indeed man has destroyed himself by his own hands and spread misery and ruin through all the globe. What then is to be done in this woeful case ? and how shall man be just with God ? Is there no way left whereby an apostatized Church may be restored without doing violence to the law and justice of God ? No, no way is left on the principle of the law, which she is under the malediction of, by which she can be raised from the low estate into which she has plunged herself ; for a flaming sword turning every way is there placed for the purpose of keep-

ing the Tree of Life inviolable, for this Tree of Life is not the covenant of works nor the way leading to it; but it is the channel through which divine mercy may be conveyed to fallen man, or the Tree on which much fragrant fruit grows. May not we then expect and look for great and mighty things to spring from this Tree,—this mystical Apple-Tree—that shall be favourable towards, and likewise go far by way of rescuing the Church from thralldom, darkness, and death? Yes, surely we may, for to tell the truth, here alone is the alternative; her rescue must be effected by means, either of the old covenant or the new covenant; and Paul says, if salvation be of works it is not of grace; but surely it must be by grace since we are told grace came by our Lord Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ is this Apple-Tree in a mystery; and this being the true state of the case, the rescue, and final salvation of the Church is wholly suspended on, and wrapped up in this mystical Apple-Tree.

But we observe again.—As the setting up of this Tree of Life, as the Prophet of the Lord speaks so very sweetly of in these words, “But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be Ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting,” *Micah*, 5. 2. Also as Christ himself speaks of himself, saying,—“I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was,” &c.—*Prov.* 8. 23. “I say, as the setting up of this Tree of Life, and the preparation of all the celestial fruit that ever was to be found thereon is a matter of such unspeakable interest to all the sons and daughters of Zion, we will again notice here; as from scripture it is plain, that from before time this lovely Tree was set up and all matters in relation to what he should be, and the relation he was to stand in to the Church, and of his espousing her cause, standing in her stead, and fighting her battles, were all adjusted and permanently settled, and in time the whole of it was carried into execution in a way so satisfactory to the eternal Father, that the whole was publicly declared by the resurrection of Christ from the dead, and by which she was begotten again to a lively hope; and in that blessed hope she has lived and rejoiced ever since, none daring to make her afraid. Just so stands this important matter, and interesting it truly is to the whole household of faith.

J. OSBOURN.

A SERMON, ON REV. IV. 2, 3.

BY A POOR MAN.

“And immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne.

"And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone; and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald."

We notice here—first, the transformation—"Immediately I was in the spirit;" and, secondly, the revelation.

I. First, the transformation—"Immediately I was in the spirit."

Now those who are taught of the Lord, and understand the import of these words, and are in their right minds—if all the wealth and worth and powers of this world could be laid at their feet, and that which is in these sentences laid before them, and they could have their choice, which they would prefer of the two, they would treat that which is temporal with contempt, compared with the vast blessedness contained in the words, "I was in the spirit." *There is every thing.* There is not a blessing in the everlasting covenant, there is not an achievement attained by the dear Redeemer, there is not a testimony which the Holy Ghost has recorded, there is not a deliverance which the saints ever had or can have, there is not a pleasure which they can be filled with, nor one note of praise which they can ascribe to God, through a never-ending eternity, that is not included, or does not stand inseparably connected with this blessed declaration, "Immediately I was in the spirit."

Of course it is my business here to endeavour to describe to you what it is to be "in the spirit." And there are three things essential to bring us into that state which is here implied; the first is, a sight and sense of the necessity of the same; the second is, the means by which the same is brought about; and the third is, the power by which this transformation is realized.

1. The first thing is, a sight and sense of the necessity of it.

(1.) And in order to know the necessity of it, there must be an uncomfortableness, a most solemn uncomfortableness, arising from all that is contrary to the spirit and life and liberty of the gospel of God. Now the so-called pleasures, and profanities, and unlawful pursuits of this world, must become repulsive and hateful. There is the great point. It is not enough for the Holy Ghost to shew a man the hatefulness of these things. You may reason with any man of a tolerable share of intelligence and sober-mindedness, and bring him by a course of reasoning to a consciousness of the vanity of all these things; and when you have done so, you may think you have done every thing, but you have in reality done nothing, because "the one thing needful" is absent, and there is no disposition to stand opposed to what we know to be repulsive to the gospel. Hence the Lord himself not only promises to take away the "heart of stone"—he does not stop there; were he to do so, it

would enable a man to discover a sense of the wrong, but he would have no disposition to hate it, no disposition to forsake it, no disposition to get away from it. That is the great *desideratum* (if I may so speak) that we often feel the need of in its exercise. Therefore it is one thing to know a wrong, and another thing to have in connection with that knowledge a repulsiveness to it, a crying out to God for deliverance from it. You may depend upon it, that a conviction of sin unattended with this, will end where it began; it began in your natural conscience, by a natural power; and as it began by a natural power, it will end by a natural power; and such persons will become blind, and dead, and ten times more hardened, after such convictions, than they ever were before. They will return "as a dog to his vomit," with ten times more zest than ever; they will return "as the sow that is washed to her wallowing in the mire," with ten times more eagerness and beastliness than they ever did before. Therefore there must not only be a conviction of the hatefulness of sin, but there must be, in connection with that conviction, a disposition against it, a determination against it, and a crying out of the soul unto God for deliverance from it. This is one thing essential to transformation. Hence it is that a swearer knows he does wrong—so do all the profane; but the knowledge of a thing being wrong is one thing, and a disposition to avoid it is another. David says, "Incline not mine heart to any evil thing." Here is a great point. Nature is evilly bent, and it will never be otherwise while we live; and therefore what we want is, the power of God to bend the soul in direct opposition to all the low propensities of our fallen nature. And it is well for us that God is our judge in this matter. The Lord's people are all the subjects of weaknesses and infirmities, (for there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good and sinneth not,) but God is our judge, whether those things be what we really desire to follow, or whether they are the results of our infirmities and weaknesses—whether we groan under them, and cry out to him for forgiveness. "If our hearts condemn us, God is greater than our hearts, and knoweth all things."

(2.) Secondly, there must not only be this conviction and repulsiveness, in order to spirituality; and unless we are spiritual we can never be saved—for it is positively declared, and that without any qualification, that "the children of the flesh are not the children of God;" and it is followed up with a corresponding declaration, that "they who are in the flesh cannot please God." Now look at these two declarations—that "they who are in the flesh," let them have what knowledge they may, if there is not a disposition against the flesh, "are not the chil-

dren of God," and "cannot please God," that the very prayers of such, though attended with all the tears and agonies of Esau, are an abomination to God. Oh! how important, then, is this transformation to constitute us spiritual, to the end that both we and our sacrifices may be accepted! "God had respect first unto Abel, and then unto his offering;" and God will respect an offering at no man's hand, unless the heart be first right with him; and then the offering is accepted, and not before. But, secondly, another thing essential to spirituality is a death to all legality—for "there is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." And there must not only be a death to all legality, but a keeping up of the idea of a disposition to get away from it. Now my meaning is this—that we must be brought to see and feel and know that the law of God has nothing for us but condemnation, and that our works, let them be as pious and as good as they may, (I do not care how good they are;) you may "give all your goods to feed the poor," and you may do wonders; you may form societies, and improve the moral and social state of man, and regenerate the world, morally speaking,—you may do all this, and you may "give your body to the burned" at the last; and yet all these wonderful works shall do nothing. I speak of the creature bringing his doings, in opposition to what my text contains. You know Paul said—"I may have learning, and all manner of gifts, and perform all manner of good works, and yet if I have not the love of God I am nothing." We must be brought to see that the flesh can do nothing for us, that our good works have nothing for us, that our characters (apart from Jesus Christ) have nothing for us, that there is a negative put upon the whole, from first to last; and instead of holding with some, who take the law, and say we must obey the commandments and then apply to Jesus Christ, this delusion must be discovered, and we must be brought to see that the penalty of the law is a penalty still, and that the flesh is still "enmity to God." We must be completely cut off from the whole, and left in a forlorn, helpless, ruined, wretched, miserable condition out of hell.

2. Then the second thing is, that which we wish to be conformed to. You see how all our conformity to the world is nothing but deformity, in the sight of God, though admirable in the sight of men. All real conformity of a profitable kind consists in conformity to Jesus Christ, though that will make us very objectionable in the eyes of the world.

(1.) First, then, we look at the kingdom of Jesus Christ; and we see that in his kingdom there is life, and no death; in his kingdom there is holiness, and no sin; in his kingdom there

is peace, and no war; in his kingdom there is plenty, and no scarcity; in his kingdom there is safety, and no danger; in his kingdom there is eternity, and no end; and in his kingdom there is no trouble; and if you are born of God you will see this kingdom, and you will in your own mind contrast it with the kingdom of this world, and you will long to be conformed to the kingdom of Jesus Christ, you will see such an emptiness and nothingness in the kingdoms of this world, compared with the kingdom of Jesus Christ.

(2.) Go on further, and look at the gospel, as contrasted with the law, and you will see that the gospel brings every thing suited to you, as a prisoner under the law of God. It brings in a righteousness, to deliver you—and there will be a longing to know what it is to have the peace of God by that righteousness; it brings in an atonement, to put an end to sin; it brings in a surety, that stands engaged to present a poor sinner “without spot or wrinkle or any such thing,” at the last great day; it brings in a new covenant, wherein all the perfections of God appear harmonized; it brings in a divine teacher, the holy and blessed Spirit, for he comes by the gospel, and the gospel comes by him; it brings in the everlasting love of God; it brings in every needful supply; it brings in conquest over the enemy; it brings in every thing that a ruined, filthy, guilty, helpless worm can possibly need. “My God shall supply all your need, according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.”

Now there are two steps towards spirituality—being “in the Spirit.” The one is a repulsiveness to all that is hostile, and the other is an attractiveness to that which is essential to our eternal welfare.

3. The third thing is power. “Beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, we are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the spirit of the Lord.” There was power in this case. “There was a door opened” to John, “and the first voice which I heard,” saith he, “*was* as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter. And immediately I was in the spirit.” Now let us come at once to the matter—for “the preparation of the heart,” as well as “the answer of the tongue, is of the Lord.” What I have before said merely refers to the preparation of the heart—conviction, apprehension of the things suited to our circumstances. Now I do not know whether I can open up this part before you better than by contrast.

(1.) First, are there not times when you are just in that state of mind which Agur (*Prov. 30.*) describes, when he says, “I am more brutish,” that is, more earthly and carnal and sensual,

"I am more brutish than any man; and I have not the understanding of a man, neither have I the knowledge of the holy." And the Psalmist says—"So foolish and ignorant was I, that I was as a beast before thee." Now are there not times, when you really are so disregarded, in such a degraded condition, as regards your state of mind, as it were in a dung-hill state, and your thoughts, your affections, your feelings, altogether earthly, altogether corrupt, and almost as far removed from heaven as hell itself, and you in such a state as you never knew while you were in a state of nature. The abominable state into which the poor child of God sinks at times is almost inconceivable; sunk in the thick clay—wretched and miserable; and although in this state there seems a readiness to catch at any thing—prepared for the worst thing the devil could find you to do. And yet, though that be the case, still there is a solemn desire after eternal things, and there is a secret mourning and uncomfortableness while you are in this state. I shall not perhaps say too much, when I tell you that such a state of mind seems something like conformity to the devil, something like conformity to the old serpent. And what is this state of mind? It is nothing less than open manifestation of yourself as a sinner; it is the "breaking up of the fountains of the great deep."

(2.) And then, on the other hand, when the Lord is pleased to bring home the word with power, and to shed abroad his love, and to bring faith, and fear, and prayer, and meditation, and affection, and liberty, and freedom, and holiness, and righteousness, and peace, and satisfaction, and rest into exercise, there is such a sweet transformation of mind, you come so completely out of that state, that you are dead to all that is "earthly, sensual, and devilish." As to the world, it has gone back like a shadow; as to sin, it has "fallen like lightning from heaven;" as to Satan, he is at a distance; as to tribulation, the mountains of tribulation that stood before us have all melted away; as to the low valleys, respecting which we feared that they were filled with pits, into which we were in danger of falling, they are turned into pleasant levels; and crooked things are made straight, and rough places plain, and darkness light before us; and the law of God so prevails, and Christ is so precious, that we really feel we are inseparably connected with everlasting life, and fitly bound up in God's everlasting love, and as clean as Jesus Christ himself, by union with him in his blood, and that we are righteous even as he is righteous, and loved even as he is loved, and safe even as he is safe, and live even as he lives, and reign even as he reigns, and that there is nothing in the vast domain of infinity which we can need to make us happy and delight us through all eternity, that is not freely be-

stowed and revealed to us, and brought into our possession. Why, when we are brought into this state of mind we begin to take delight in the Lord's ways; when we read the Bible, it does not matter which chapter we read—we see the Lord Jesus Christ from beginning to end; it is all glorious together; a little sermon is turned into a great one, and a humble observation into a very exalted remark; and really, the very name of Jesus Christ will appear brighter and greater and more wonderful than heretofore. And it is astonishing too how soon we pass from one to the other. The text says, "Immediately I was in the spirit;" and sometimes we sink from the throne of spirituality into the dung-hill, while at other times we rise from the dung-hill to the throne of spirituality. Hence it is a great mystery with the Lord's people how it is they pass from the one to the other so quickly; but a state of spirituality depends entirely on the power and presence of the Lord, and the very moment he exercises his power and grants his presence, that very moment every thing carnal is subdued, and the soul is alive to eternal things, and the very moment that the power ceases to operate, and he hides his face, we sink down in the dark, and like Abraham return to our place.

Natural men cannot understand "the things of the spirit," neither do they know any thing of what I have been speaking. The Lord's people, all through the Bible, are characterized by the words "life," "living creatures." Hence, when Ezekiel saw them, as cherubims—"living creatures;" and there was a spirit in those "living creatures," and likewise in the wheels, which wheels were, strictly speaking, one wheel. These were transversed in such a way as to form a globe; and that globe which these wheels formed, is the spiritual world—and it has summer and winter, seed-time and harvest; and in the end this spiritual world shall pass out of the region of revolving seasons, and shall sit down in everlasting sunshine, where cold and winter and tribulation can come no more for ever. Therefore these "living creatures" have a world to themselves: no unclean creature can enter into it; it is a dwelling place we have by ourselves. It is made up of elements that are altogether eternal; there is not one time-element in it; the whole system is eternal—the light is eternal, the very air we breathe there is eternal. "For the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. Therefore we look not upon the things that are seen, which are temporal, but upon the things that are not seen, which are eternal."

It unites man to his Maker, and it disunites him from every thing that is dishonourable—acquits us from all our sins, however numerous—dissolves all our connections with death, dis-

solves all our connections with the devil, dissolves all our connections with the world, and with every thing that is tormenting and unprofitable. It dissolves every unhallowed union, and confirms us in our connections with the ever-blessed God. For this new spiritual connection we are called "children of the resurrection," not to die any more.

II. We now hasten to the revelation—believing that many of you know what spirituality of mind is, and what the reverse is. There are times when the power of God rests upon you; and when it does, it is surprising how it lifts you up from the world to communion with God; you feel and rejoice that all is well.

This revelation is fourfold. The first is, the throne in heaven; the second is, one who sat upon the throne; the third is, his appearance; and the fourth is, the glory of that throne: there is a glory round about it, "like unto an emerald."

1. The first is, the establishment of the throne. And this will imply two things—first, principle; and, secondly, purpose.

(1.) Principle. God never does anything without some principle of action. Now you know he founded his first government upon the law: "Of all the trees of the garden thou mayest eat, but of the tree of knowledge thou mayest not eat." There is the principle upon which that government is founded. But Adam failed; and there was an end of that government. Then God had another government, and he founded it upon a similar principle; not similar in words, but similar in form, or rather, similar in spirit: and he said—Now I am the Lord thy God; you make me supreme in all [you say and do outwardly, as a nation, and you shall have all these temporal blessings—but act contrary to this principle of my supremacy, and you shall have all the curses that are written in this book. That government failed; the Jews were scattered; and there they are, to this day. John saw another throne, and the Lord founds another government now; and he founds it on this principle, described in the first verse of the 110th Psalm. That is the original principle, and all that follows accords with that principle, "Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool." That is the principle; and Jesus Christ, in accordance with this certainty of victory for his people, is said, in the same sense, to be "a priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedec:" "The Lord has sworn, and I will not repent; thou art a priest after the order of Melchisedec." And therefore the principle upon which the new covenant turns is the reign of Jesus Christ; so that if he had failed in life, or death, or resurrection or ascension, or should come, in the last great day, with the intention of raising his people from the dead, and should then fail in what he came to accomplish, then this

government would have failed. But is there one instance, from the beginning of the Bible to the end, of this new covenant government failing? And it is important for me and you to understand, (in order to make the matter as clear as possible,) that it is founded on the reign of Christ. "Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." But perhaps it will bring the matter nearer, and put it in a more simple form, if I say, that the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ is the principle upon which this new throne, this new government, is founded. This work is a finished work: he "finished transgression, and made an end of sin." Therefore there is no danger of his failing. "Thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations;" therefore it follows that the government is from everlasting to everlasting.

(2.) But secondly, it will be in purpose as well. God had some purpose, in founding this government, and the purpose stands thus: "Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation, and shall not be ashamed." Why, how is it that you and I have been kept from shame? It has been through the blood and righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ; "And shall not be ashamed, nor confounded, world without end." That is the purpose, in that lies all the glory. Can this purpose fail? The Lord hath purposed this: and who shall disannul it? His hand is stretched out to accomplish it; and who shall turn it back? "A throne was set in heaven."

2. Look at the appearance of God the Father. "And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone."

It is not for me to determine whether the Greek word here translated "jasper" be that sort of stone which we call jasper—very likely it is not; nor is it my business to waste your time, by indulging in the frivolities of some, who suppose that the redness here mentioned sets forth the sensible judgment of God: I think this would be handling the matter in a way in which it was not intended. You must bear in mind, however, that this is not Jesus Christ but God the Father, for in the next chapter you find Jesus Christ coming and taking the book out of the hand of him that sat in the midst.

"He was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone." Now this is oriental language, and is of course to be understood figuratively.

(1.) The first thing that is evidently meant is beauty. When does God our Father look most glorious? Why, in possession of his beauty. The high priest under the law, with his breastplate and twelve stones—when he went into the "holy of holies," there was the brightness of the Lord's glory shining between the cherubims; and as he entered there, the glory of

the Lord shone on those stones, and made a most beautiful appearance. And this is the type of Jesus Christ, who will by and by take us into the presence of God ; and as the glory of God shone on the precious stones in the high priest's breast-plate, so will the glory of God shine upon us, when we are taken by Jesus Christ into his presence, and when our glory shall be perfected. And perhaps it is in allusion to the glory of the Lord shining on them that they are called " Urim and Thumim "—" lights and perfections." But the beauty. If God our Father lose his people, he will lose his beauty ; if the dear Redeemer lose his people, he will have his beauty ; and therefore I believe that God is here set forth as " a jasper and sardine stone," to denote that he has possession of his people that are precious to him. If he were to lose his people, he would lose his beauty. Would God the Father have any attractive beauty to me, if he were not my Father ? Oh ! if there be a poor deluded mortal here, who advocates free will, I would say to him : " What ! did you never read that God the Father gave all these precious stones into the hands of Jesus ? He gave them into safe hands." That is one of the beauties of God the Father, that he has taken possession of us, and will possess us to all eternity. The first thing therefore is beauty. If the dear Redeemer were to lose his people, he would lose his beauty. Why, the beauty of a Saviour consists in saving ; the beauty of a Redeemer consists in actually redeeming ; the beauty of a surety consists in making the suretyship good ; the beauty of a king consists in enriching, and making his kingdom peaceful and happy and prosperous ; the beauty of a Mediator consists in interceding ; the beauty of a witness consists in applying the truth and making that truth effectual ; and the Holy Ghost has told the truth, and will make it effectual to all his people.

(2.) And then, secondly, it also means preciousness. You see it must be understood in the new covenant sense : preciousness. And is there any thing we have ever met with so precious to the eye ? Light is sweet and precious to the natural eye ; and nothing is so precious to look at with the eye of the understanding, as our God in the revelation of himself. Nay, I will go further than that ; that although we are wrapt up in cold mortality, yet amidst all our wretchedness of mind, amidst all our sweet feelings and sensations and pleasures, none are equal to those which arise from the revelation of Jesus Christ. And therefore it denotes beauty and preciousness.

(3.) And then, thirdly, it denotes riches ; because there may be love where there is nothing but poverty, and there may be riches where there is no love. But here they unite. Therefore riches are connected with the throne of our God. And so it is,

that the Lord is pleased to carry this idea all through the gospel. In the Jewish dispensation the pearls and precious stones and gold are all to remind us of his riches; and the twelve fountains enriched with precious stones are to remind us of riches; and the church having twelve gems in her matrimonial crown is to remind us of our riches. And so the Lord our God is rich, while this world is miserably poor.

(4.) But then, not only does it mean beauty, and preciousness, and riches, but it also means prosperity: the Lord professes these things. But I must not enlarge.

Now, then, here is the throne, established for salvation purposes, upon salvation principles, and here are beauties to attract, and nothing to repel; it is all attractive from first to last. "He that sat upon the throne was like unto a jasper and sardine stone"—something very precious and beautiful and attractive.

3. Now, lastly, the glory. "And there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald"—because of its precious colours.

Now the rainbow, as you are aware, is continually set forth as a type of the covenant; and there are five or six senses, in which it is so.

(1.) The first is, visibility. The Lord says, "My bow shall be seen." And, in a spiritual sense, the new covenant is seen: "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will show them his covenant." You very often in the scriptures meet with the rainbow in the first and tenth chapters of Ezekiel, we have the rainbow. His people can see it; and therefore if he has brought you into this new covenant, you may be sure that the evening can never get at you, the law can never get at you, the old covenant cannot get at you, death cannot get at you to hurt you, it may take your body, but it cannot take your soul.

(2.) Then the second thing, I think is independence. The rainbow is entirely under God's controul. Men can, by the prismatic glass, 'it is true, produce an artificial rainbow, but it is very small and trivial, and we can see it is of man's invention; and men invent certain gospels and creeds, but we can see that they are of human invention; we can distinguish between these prismatic rainbows, and the one God has made; there is a wonderful difference between the two—one is obliged to be in a dark room,—a false gospel cannot endure the light; the true rainbow is beyond human controul; and so is every promise, every item, every précept, every glory of the everlasting covenant are out of human controul—they are under God's command. Some men tell us a sinner, dead in sin, can come and take these blessings, if they like. Why, even a living man cannot do this—much less a dead man. The living know they cannot, for they

have tried; and if the living cannot, I know the dead cannot. No; they shall be given to those for whom they are prepared.

(3.) Then, thirdly, we come to the old idea again—beautiful; the rainbow is beautiful; every one admires the rainbow. There is something in the rainbow different from every thing else in nature; and so there is something in the Gospel of God to a poor sinner whose eyes have been opened, far different and far more beautiful than all other things.

(4.) Fourthly, it signifies serenity. How peaceful is the rainbow! There is nothing violent or threatening about it. Who has ever trembled at a rainbow, afraid that it would do him some injury? None. And it is the same with the ways of God—they are peaceful, now. Often when we have been harassed with sins, and doubts, and fears, the Lord has come and said, "Peace, be still; and immediately there was a great calm." The rainbow is peaceful, not like the thunder and lightning; and this is the difference between Mount Sinai and Mount Sion; there is nothing but storm in the one, and nothing but indescribable peace in the other.

(5.) But, fifthly, it may also mean showers of blessings; there is always rain connected with the rainbow; indeed the falling of the rain is one essential of producing the rainbow. I know very well we are spoken of by nature as ground which the Lord hath cursed; but showers of blessings descend upon it, and it "drinks in the rain which falleth off upon it, and bringeth forth fruit meet for the use of him for whom it is prepared," it becomes good ground.

(6.) Sixthly, it may not only mean the things of which I have spoken, but it may also mean the presence of the sun; you cannot have a rainbow without the sun. And so, under the gospel of the blessed God, we have "the sun of righteousness," that "shall rise with healing in his wings." "And thy sun shall no more go down; neither shall thy moon withdraw itself: for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended."

(7.) Lastly, it also implies certainty. The Lord said—"My bow *shall* be in the cloud, and I *will* look upon it, and there *shall* be harvest, there *shall* be heat, there *shall* be cold, there *shall* be day and night." Here is no uncertainty about it. And so we may rest assured, from seeing this "rainbow round about the throne," that we shall receive all the blessings of the everlasting covenant. No good thing shall fail, but our garners shall be full, yielding all manner of store—"Happy is the people that are under this government;" "Happy is the people that are in such a case; yea, happy is the people whose God is the Lord."

THE GOSPEL AMBASSADOR; OR, Christian Pilgrim's Friend.

"Blessed are the poor in Spirit, for their's is the kingdom of Heaven," *Mat. v. 3*

"The Election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded," *Rom. xi. 7.*

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SHALL WE SIN?

"What shall we say then? shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid." *Rom. 6. 1, 2.*

"Wait, my dear uncle," said a beloved niece, as we were wending our way towards the great city; "I am afraid, if I really believed myself interested in all you say, it would render me too indifferent about sin; I fear that such doctrines are dangerous." I replied, "Let us suppose a very simple case, and then tell me if you can possibly find so powerful a motive to good works, and to the resistance of sin, in all its varied dresses, as that supplied by the apprehension, and heart-felt knowledge of that love which is the centre of all spiritual obedience, and of everything that is acceptable at the court of Heaven for the love of Christ constraineth us," *2 Cor. 5. 14.*

Imagine to yourself an orphan girl left, just at the dawn of womanhood, without the slightest provision for her subsistence, without a friend or relative in the wide world. The poor girl is destitute, and glad to engage herself in the first service that offers. She speedily meets with a stern, severe old man, with whom she enters into an engagement, as *servant of all work*, and binds herself, in terms of his own dictation, to serve him without limitation or appeal, and under penalties, the most distressing to conceive. He takes her home, rears in her trembling ear the rigid rules by which her every movement must be guided; gives her a copy, which he bids her learn by heart, and then commands her to commence her task. To work she goes, in earnestness of soul; see the anxious novice: see how she toils and labours; hear her sigh out her hope that this and that performance may be acceptable when her new master comes; observe how often she returns and gives another touch to this, and

re-arranges that, to make it, as she vainly hopes, more finished, more complete. And now her first day's labour closes, she stands a moment and surveys the whole, and timidly and hopefully applauds herself a little. The hour of the old man's coming arrives, punctual to the second: hear his heavy, measured step approaching. The orphan's heart is bursting with emotion: she almost faints between hope and fear. The master enters. Unmoved by her appealing look, he scowls around upon her preparations, and, with a darkened brow, sneeringly enquires if this is what she calls "good work." She tries to say that she has done her best, but terror choaks her words. He tells her to repeat her rules. She falters out a word or two—ah, quite enough! he points to every work. She sees, now he is come, how utterly beneath the point of finish each appears. Again she ventures an attempt at pleading—"so young," she says—"better next time"—is all her swollen heart can utter. Without one pity-ray upon his brow, the cruel, stern old man shows her a list of tortures to which she will be subject, unless she can make perfect *all* her works; then, growling curses, leaves her till the morrow.

The next day comes. By earliest dawn behold our little orphan once again, with earnest eagerness, commence her toils; at first, she seems to make some progress, and feels a little pleased that yesterday's defects are overcome; but now she meets a difficulty—she stops, repeats her rules—she tries again, but fails; again she consults her rules; again alas she fails, and so goes on the day, till night comes. See how she weeps, poor, weak, and helpless one! The heavy step is heard again. She trembling, sinks upon her knees. The old man enters. One clouded glance suffices. He sees the cause of her dismay, and now, with uplifted hands, she begs for mercy, and fills her mouth with promises to do better. In accents harsh and slow, he repeats the rules, and then the penalties, and displays a hideous whip of knotted cords: see, his sinewy arm uplifted, his victim, fainting, sinks upon the floor. He withholds the blow, but curses the unconscious one as he leaves her for another day.

Again the dawning of the morrow finds our now almost despairing orphan toiling to remove the difficult obstruction to her progress, but all in vain. Her rules now only aggravate her woe; they tell her *what* to do, but cannot instruct her *how*. Still on she struggles, till she hears again the well-known visitor. See how she trembles, hear her groans, as covered with shame, stretched on the ground she lies, expecting all the threatened vengeance, when her master enters. Nor does she mistake the cold severity of his unfeeling heart. No sooner does the tyrant

enter than he rudely seizes and tears the ragged covering from her tender back, and without remorse inflicts a thousand gashes on his shrieking victim. Again he leaves her, remorseless, in her sad condition, "no eye to pity," no hand to heal, but cast out, weltering in her blood, hear how she groans, see how she writhes in agony! And will he come to-morrow? Oh, yes! and day by day he comes, still with unrelenting heart. Without one ray of hope, behold the poor and helpless one abandon all attempts, to please her tyrant-master. Now, sullenly, she passes all her time in idleness, bemoaning her sad lot. See her all ragged, filthy, quite abandoned to her hapless fate, while daily comes her cruel old tormentor. He tires not, he pities not. His heart is stone. Alas! who, now, can help the cast-away? The man that holds her, holds her by the iron-grasp of right.

Observe again our orphan, sitting, bleeding in the dust. She muses; hark! she utters an earnest wish, the only one desire that yet remains in her lacerated breast. What is it?—"Oh, that I had a husband, who would take me from this dreadful servitude to his own home, that I might there be happy! Oh a home, a home, a home! but I shall never have a home. Alas! who is there in the world so mean that he could ever think of such a wretched orphan girl as I?" Poor, broken-hearted creature!—see how her heated brow refuses now to weep,—this cannot long endure. The icy hand of Death, though he bring horrors in his train, would seem a kindly hand compared with that which now is laid upon thee. But not the icy hand, but one of pure, warm flesh, directed by a heart of tenderness, is coming to thy aid. Look up, poor dying one; turn thy glazed eyes towards the light. Behold, one who *can* pity and *can* help is "showing himself through the lattice" (Cant. ii. 9.) She turns her pallid face, and looks and wonders, and wonders still, and looks.—Oh, fact most marvellous! oh, subject most profound! and yet quite true, more true than all the facts of earth. Wonder, oh, heavens! sing praises, oh, my soul! let choruses of hallelujah celebrate the meeting of this wondrous pair! Which shall we first describe, say?—neither; we shall see them yet again. Observe, our orphan half rises! see how her bosom heaves, how timidly she moves, and how ashamed of her condition. She cannot venture more; but, see, he smiles,—oh, what a smile!—and puts a little slip of paper through a crevice in the window, and vanishes. How quickly she rises now! but he is gone. Ah, how she dwells upon those words! What are they? Listen. "I will see you again" (John xvi. 22). How she eats every word! Can we be surprised that she wonders? And now she has relief; she bursts into a flood of tears,—but what

tears? Ah, the first tears of this sort she has wept in her orphan state—they are tears of joy!

Night comes again; her old tormentor visits her as usual, and wonders how it is she seems so willing now to turn "her back to the smiter." He knows not who has been to see her in his absence. She begs the old man to bring her a little water—for she has long been shut up in a prison chamber.—"A little water!" says the cruel man. "What for?" "To wash myself," the skeleton replies. "Get water where thou canst, thou filthy jade!" the tyrant mutters, and flinging her most rudely from him stalks away. In the darkness of the night see the poor orphan try to sleep, but no, "her heart waketh" (Gen. v. 2). She cannot but wonder who that smiling stranger was, and though sinking amid a thousand fears and griefs, still she holds fast the little slip of paper, and ever and anon, when at the lowest point of sinking, half believing all was fancy, or a dream, she hears, or thinks she hears, a gentle whisper, "I will see you again."

Days and weeks pass on: she has begged to be allowed to go again to try if she could work, but her inexorable master told her that until her present debt was paid, even to the utmost farthing, no liberty should she obtain. Day by day was she still tormented, and morning after morning, when the sun arose, would she turn again towards the lattice, hoping to see him that had said, "I will see you again;" and every evening would she watch the fading twilight, and gently breathe out her last request, "Remember thy word unto thy servant on which thou hast caused me to hope." "But hope deferred maketh the heart sick" (Prov. xiii. 12). And so our poor orphan, gradually sinking under the whip of the oppressor, and the disappointment of her hopes, added to which she was now visited, night after night, by an invisible one who told her, she had been altogether deceived, that he who appeared at the window came only to mock her, and that unless she gave the little slip of paper to her master, she would when it is discovered, be subjected to severe punishment, till at last she was again brought down to the very gates of death.

It was at the moment when the rich morning tint had just dissolved the last gauze remnant of the twilight curtain, and cast its glowing ruddy softness on the distant horizon, that our orphan girl, after a night of gloom, more gloomy, and of darkness more distressing, than she had known before, awoke from a trouble-dose. She felt the icy damps run chillingly throughout her dying, emaciated frame. Still one soft whisper bubbled from her bursting bosom, "Oh, come again." Thought gave wings to the whisper, and flew to the lattice. The languid eye

could scarcely follow, but behold, and wonder, there stood again the same most lovely man! He beckons, will she arise? is she not too far gone? astonishing circumstance! he has put strength within her, and she springs upon her feet; but how ashamed she is, does he not reproach her because she is still so filthy. He beckons again. She timidly approaches—he speaks—what melody in every tone—what astonishing words, “Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away” (*Cant. ii. 10.*) “With desire have I desired to come unto this hour,” she stammers out, “Look not upon me, because I am black.” He replies, “Behold a fountain open for sin and for uncleanness” (*Ezekiel xiii. 1*) “And he showed her his hands and his feet.” Then, taking courage, for her strength and beauty had suddenly returned,—yea, look at her, did she ever appear so beautiful before!—she says to him, “Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow;” and he washed her with water, and said, “Now are ye clean, through the word which I have spoken to thee.” Then he put a beautiful robe upon her, and gave her a letter, sealed with a crown of glory, and as he gave it her, he said, within himself, “Behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her. And I will give her her vineyards from thence and the valley of Achor for a door of hope, and she shall sing there, as in the days of her youth, and as in the days when she came up out of the land of Egypt.” Then turning again to her, he said, “Thou shalt call me Ishi,” (margin, *my husband*) *Hosea ii. 14, 15, 16.* Having thus spoken, she begged he would allow her to call her master, for she dared not leave her prison without his consent, and he said, “Call him,” which having done, she was astonished to find the old man come so quickly, and still more surprised to find the cruel old lawyer (for he was a lawyer by profession) with a smile on his countenance, and also that he knew her wonderful new friend. “For when he saw him he fell at his feet as dead, and he laid his right hand upon him, and said, *Fear not*, I am the first and the last; I am he that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore, Amen, and have the keys of hell and of death.” Then the old man arose and surveyed our orphan, and said, “Deliver her from going down into the pit, for I have found a ransom” (*Job xxxiii. 24.*) She now went out with her friend, and began to tell him a little of her pedigree, how base she was, and how fully she deserved the treatment the old lawyer had given her. But her new lover stopped her by saying, “I know your frame, and remember you are but dust” (*Psa. 103. 14*). They had now “wandered into the wilderness in a solitary way” (*Psa. 107. 4*.) He left her for a little season, but said at parting, “Though I

go away, I will come again unto you and receive you unto myself" (*John* 14. 3). He also told her to read the letter in his absence, for it testified of himself (*John* 5. 39). While he was with her, "she believed not for joy," and now that he was gone, she sat down to read her letter, hoping to learn something respecting his person, who he was, for she wist not who had spoken to her (*John* 20. 14). With trembling hand she opened the letter, and began. How could she bear the astonishing news? Truly no wonder that she wept over every word, and was so often heard to cry out, "Why me? why me?" for her letter told her, that *Ishi* was the greatest man that ever lived in the world, that his riches were unsearchable (*Eph.* 3. 8). And then the letter told the poor orphan girl, "All are yours" (*1 Cor.* 3. 22). "For as he is, so are you in this world" (*1 John* 4. 17). That he is wisdom itself, and that all power in heaven and in earth was given to him. That his beauty was incomparable, for "He is the chiefest among ten thousand," yea, "he is altogether lovely" (*Cant.* 5. 16); that the tenderness of his heart is such that he would not even break a bruised reed. That whom once he loves, he loves to the end (*John* 13. 1). That he is perfection and makes all those perfect with his comeliness put upon them (*Ezek.* 16. 14); indeed, the emotion of our dear orphan was such, as she read on, that her heart failed, and she fainted with astonishment, and thus remained for a time. Just, however, as she was reviving, the invisible tormentor who had so often whispered lies into her ear, respecting the reappearing of her wonderful friend, came again, and suggested, that she had done very wrong in fainting—"You ought always to pray, and not faint." Poor heart, it was too tender to bear this; she began reproaching herself, and quicker than lightning, the invisible liar began insinuating thus: "He knows everything; he knows you fainted, he is offended, he will never come again." Bewildered and distressed, the poor little orphan girl turned her eyes towards the hills whence cometh her strength, but again, the wily serpent takes another step. "You are deceived, it was I who appeared to you in the shape of that most beautiful man. I wrote the letter, it is all a delusion." Poor helpless one, she is in the "Valley of Achor" (*Hos.* 2. 15), but behold a "door of hope," she sees her beloved coming skipping over the hills (*Cant.* 2. 8). Oh! how joyfully does she rise up to meet him. She tells him about the invisible foe, and he replies, "I saw Satan, like lightning, fall from heaven, but rejoice not that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice that your names are written in heaven" (*Luke* 2. 10, 18, 20). How her heart failed when he spoke. Then he said, "All things are ready, come ye to the marriage" (*Matt.* 22. 4), but she

was fain to object. She said she was afraid she should disgrace him, she was so prone to evil. And now, oh, how he answers her. Now let us see what love can do, as a motive to good works. The whip is laid by, and love shall constrain. He said, "I will put my fear in thy heart (*Heb.* 8. 10), and write my laws there, and put wisdom in thine inward parts; I will put *my mind* in you, so that you shall always be fully conscious what pleases me, and what I hate. For what I love, *my mind* in you shall love; what I hate, *my mind* in you shall hate; I know that thou wilt deal very treacherously, and art a transgressor" (*Isa.* 48. 8). "Fear not, for thou shalt not be ashamed: neither be thou confounded, for thou shalt not be put to shame, for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth" (*Isa.* 54. 4). "For mine own sake, even for mine own sake, will I do it, for how should my name be polluted" (*Isa.* 48. 11). "I have called thee by name, thou art mine. So have I sworn that I would not be wrath with thee, nor rebuke thee. For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed, but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed" (*Isa.* 44. 9, 10). "I will shed my love abroad in thy heart, so that thou shalt love me with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy strength" (*Mark* 12. 30); and thou shalt love me, because I first loved thee, and as I have said, "If thou doest anything contrary to the mind I put in thee, I will do as I once did to a brother of thine. And the Lord turned and looked upon Peter, and Peter went out and wept bitterly."

"Love and grief compound an unction,
Both to cleanse our wounds and heal."

And having so said, he took her, weeping as she was, unto his banqueting house, and his banner over her was LOVE.

Now, beloved, what think you of our orphan girl? Will she be careless how she behaves towards such a husband? can you show us a stronger motive to "good works" than love? "For the love of Christ constraineth us" (*2 Cor.* v. 14).

One closing remark: our dear orphan, when under the school-master, Moses (*Gal.* iii. 14), was longing for a husband for the sake of a home: she was afraid of hell, and therefore desired to go to heaven. But the moment she had one view of Christ, she forgot all about heaven, and her whole heart and affections were set on a person, and therefore her plaintive moan, "Oh, come again, come again!"

"Could we His person learn to prize,
We more should prize His grace."

"What shall we say then? shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?" *impossible!* alas, it is possible for such an one to slip and even fall, *but never can they continue in sin.* Amen.
—*Cottage Lecturer, No. 3.*

CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE.

There being within the range of our observation persons who are, by rushing into forbidden unions, subjected to most of the miseries set forth in the following letter—yea, some even to *worse* miseries than are in the following letter described,—this being to an alarming extent the present state of things among some professors, we think the following may be a word of caution to some who have not yet gone too far to retrace their steps,

Eds.

MY DAUGHTER IN THE FAITH,—I received yours, and read it with indignation, and shall take the liberty to answer it in three particulars: First, I will shew you the word of the Lord; Secondly, detect the hypocrisy of thy heart; and, Thirdly, I will shew you what will befall you in the latter days.

The Most High has not tied up his children from marrying, but says, "marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled; but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge." The blessed Saviour himself honoured a wedding with his presence in Cana of Galilee, wrought his first miracle at it, "and manifested forth his glory, inasmuch that his disciples believed on him."

Even our happy enjoyment of Christ is set forth by the term espousing; and our glorious entrance into blessedness, by the consummation of a marriage in the wedding chamber.

But God says, "be not unequally yoked together with *unbelievers*. If a woman have a mind to marry, she is not at liberty to marry who she will, only in the Lord." 1 Cor. 7. 39. Mark that; her liberty is limited, to marry only in the Lord.

There are but two families in this world, "the children of God, and the children of the devil." 1 John, 3. 10. If a daughter of God marries a son of Belial, she makes herself a daughter-in-law to the devil; and by this infamous step labours to bring about an affinity between the *Most High God* and Satan.

When God brought in his bill to the antediluvian world, unlawful marriages stood first in the account: "The sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair, and they took them wives of such as they chose;" and by this they brought on the dreadful deluge. And you are going to justify them in your proceedings; and, by falling a sacrifice to their infatuations, you are endeavouring to bring on the final conflagration.

What, is there not a son of Israel that will satisfy thy desire, but thou must go and take a husband of the uncircumcised?

All the plagues, persecutions, woes, and captivities, that fell to Israel's share in the land of Canaan, began with these mixed marriages. God has set forth the miserable match of Sampson as a caution to every believer. But if thy affections are saddled upon an ass, thou wilt go on, however perverse thy proceedings may be, unless the drawn sword of God should appear in thy way. I have shewed you the word of the Lord, which is the sword of the Spirit; and if you rush upon the point of that sword, expect to pierce yourself through with many sorrows.

Let me dissect the hypocrisy of thy heart. You say, "he is a person of great property." This springs from the cursed root of covetousness: "they that will be rich fall into temptations, and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition." 1 Tim. 6, 9. As for "his beauty," that is but *skin deep*, and lays at the mercy of a cold or a fever. Jacob paid dear for this fading article; fourteen years' hard labour, many cutting disappointments, and her beauty was long balanced with a reproachful barrenness. And as her beauty was a kind of rival to God, he permitted Jacob himself to denounce her death in the face of her own father: "with whomsoever thou findest thy gods let him not live." Gen. 31. 32. Rachel had hid them. And God took Jacob at his word and sent the first arrow of death to the beautiful object. God likewise entangled her in her own words: when she said to Jacob, "Give me children or I die," God gave her a child, a Benoni, a son of her sorrow, and she died in bringing him forth.

"You verily believe that he will be converted to God." Yes, a likely matter, that God should convert a man to satisfy your carnal desires, and nurse your rebellion against his word. I know you will make a convert of him, rather than be disappointed of your lust.

Where will not a giddy woman run, when her wantonness is kindled, and she is left to kick against Christ! God compares such as you, who have waxed wanton, to a wild ass braying after her male. "A wild ass, used to the wilderness, that snuffeth up the wind at her pleasure; in her occasion, who can turn her away: he that seeks her will not weary himself, but in her wanton month he will find her." Jer. 2. 24. "He goes with you to hear the gospel, and approves of it." No doubt of that; and he will appear to get a deal of comfort from it too, while your carcass is perched at his right hand. But, depend upon it, lasciviousness conceived in his heart is the main spring of all his religion; and this will come to its final end in the bridal bed. I have seen enough of this to make a wise man mad.

I will now shew you what will befall you in the latter days. First, you will not find Christ at the wedding, yet you will not be *comfortless*; for your comforts will spring from another quarter: and while these last you will hold up your head. But when the honey month is over, you will think about turning to your first husband again, saying, it was better with me then than it is now. *Hosea 2. 7.* But the bible will appear a sealed book; the intercourse between God and your soul will be barred up; many cutting reproofs God will send you from the pulpit, which conscience will apply to your case. These things will be the beginning of sorrows with you. Finding your soul bereft of the presence of God, and sinking in distress under it, Satan will begin to tempt you, conscience will accuse you, and God will frown upon you. When this is the case, you will naturally wither to all the charms of your husband, and be brought to hate him, as the cause of your soul's distress.

When your husband sees this, it will provoke him to jealousy; your coldness to his embraces will quicken his malice; and the devil telling him that your religion is the cause, he will then appear in his proper colours, curse your profession, and take up the cudgels against you; and then you may expect to go all the rest of the way with a corpse strapped to your back.

I know this letter will not please you; it is a purge for your conscience, not a cordial for your wantonness. However, you will seek counsel from some other professor, who will approve of your measures, and then my letter will have no weight till after the wedding be over.

I do not expect an answer to this, as it is so wide to your purpose; but if ever you should write to me again, I crave one favour of you, which is, that you will never more call me your father, or even own that you were called under my ministry; for your presumption in wedlock will be a scandal even to a coal-heaver. Remember you are a daughter of Sarah as long as you do well; and I will own you as long as you obey the word of God, and no longer.

Yours, &c.,

WILLIAM HUNTINGTON.

Winchester Row, August 9, 1784.

HEAVENLY THINGS.

DEAR SIR,—Feeling a little at liberty in my soul this morning, I take up my pen, as the dear Lord shall enable me, to write a few lines to you, who I trust in the Lord's hand have been, and I hope still will be, a very great blessing to me, the most unworthy of all creatures on the earth, for I feel con-

strained to acknowledge that the Lord does, notwithstanding all my unworthiness, bless the word preached from time to time by you ; and I know you have abundant proof that your labours are not in vain in the Lord, or your strength spent for nought. But daily experience does indeed teach me that I am a poor creature of the earth, earthy, sensual and vile, and deserve nothing at the hand of the Lord but to be for ever spurned from his presence, there to abide in darkness and misery for ever. But instead of this, how very different is my lot ; instead of being left under condemnation and at a distance from God, I am brought by his love and mercy exercised towards me into fellowship and communion with him, by his spirit bearing witness with my spirit that I am a child of God ; and, says the apostle, if a child, then an heir of God, and a joint heir with Christ. And I am favoured sometimes to say, from a sweet feeling, My Father, thou art the guide of my youth ; and do feel that I have the witness of the spirit within me ; and the Lord has said by the prophet, I will put my spirit within you, and cause you (my people) to walk in my statutes ; and, says the apostle, where the spirit of God is, there is liberty, and so I find it, when I feel I have this spirit—then there is liberty in my soul to receive and believe spiritually these blessed things contained in the words of God ; for I find by experience it is only as the holy spirit is pleased to take of the things of Christ, and reveal them to me by his almighty power, that I derive any pleasure or profit therefrom, for my reading the word or hearing the word preached, if not applied with divine power from on high, I get no sweet savour, and no taking hold of the truth as it is in Jesus, if that does not first take hold of me by the Spirit and draw me to Jesus my beloved, and then I am sure to run after him and listen to the precious words that proceedeth out of his mouth ; and his word does strengthen and delight my heart, and then I feel refreshed and enlivened, and go on my way rejoicing in the strength of the Lord God of Israel, for his word does give life, imparts health unto us when we are sick, and healeth us when we are wounded. And I do find sometimes when I come to the house of God, very low in my mind and weary in body ; and the Lord does attend the word preached with power to my soul—I feel so different, I do indeed forget the poor things of time that are behind, and press forward toward the things that are before, for the prize of my high-calling of God in Christ Jesus, looking unto Jesus who is the author and will be the finisher of my faith, and feel that I can run with patience the race that is set before me, looking forward to that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all in-

quity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works, and say with the apostle, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again to a lively hope by the resurrection of Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, but is reserved in heaven for us who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. O, what an unspeakable mercy I think it is to feel that I am kept by the power of God, and in possession of this blessed hope, which hope, says the Apostle, we have as an anchor to the soul, both sure and steadfast; and it entereth into that within the veil, whither the forerunner has entered, even Jesus. O, what a blessed hope this is, that maketh not ashamed, for we shall not be disappointed in our hope and expectations, for it is a sure and certain hope and a sure promise, that all Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation, and shall not be ashamed, nor confounded, world without end; and the darkest cloud hope pierces through and waits upon the Lord, expects to prove that all is true that is written in his word; and hope long will wait and wait again, and will not give it up till the blest Lamb that once was slain, appears the God of hope, and, says the apostle, if we hope for that, we see not; then do we, with patience wait for it, and saith the prophet, it is good to hope and quietly wait for the salvation of God; so that we wait, and look, and long for the time to arrive when we shall realize all the good, and have in possession all the blessedness and glory that here we are hoping for. That is a very sweet promise in scripture, I do not just now recollect where to find it, where it is said, "They shall not labour in vain, nor spend their breath for nought;" it comes very sweet to me sometimes when I am going to the house of God. I feel very weary in body, the distance seems a long way to come; but I do find the promise fulfilled to me by the Lord blessing the word preached to my soul, and thereby strengthening my hope in the truth, and confirming his word unto me on which he does cause me to hope, causing his blessing to rest upon his own word, so that my understanding is enlightened to see, and my heart opened to receive these blessed things; my attention is fixed on them and a love to them is felt, and a love to the Lord for his goodness, and my heart is sometimes lifted up and I can say with the disciple of old, when the question was asked, "Lovest thou me?" yea, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee, and I do love thy blessed truth, I do love thy people, I do love thy house of prayer and the place where thine honour dwelleth; I have and do esteem the words of thy mouth more than my necessary food: yea, more than life

itself, for what is life, natural, or natural things, compared with spiritual life and spiritual things? for without this life in Christ Jesus, and the precious liberty I have in these blessed things of eternity, (for I am of all the most miserable) natural life apart from the spiritual life, apart from the manifest presence of God, apart from his love, apart from his sweet smiles, and when I seem at a distance from him, so that I cannot hear his voice, and he does not seem to hear my prayers and cry, and does not seem to take any notice of me in a way of love and mercy, then I get uneasy directly, and begin to doubt whether after all I am a real child of God, and shall be put aside when the right heir shall come to take possession of the crown; and I get into such a state of mind sometimes, fearing lest this should be the case, and in the dark, and cannot see my signs, and unbelief prevails so far, that I say I will not believe except I see the Lord and have a fresh manifestation of his love, and a fresh assurance that he is my Father, my Saviour, and my God; except he himself assures me of my interest, I will not believe. But when he is pleased to appear and rebuke these adverse minds, and to say unto me, "Fear not, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" then I know it is the Lord; and when he is pleased to bring me near unto him, and I can see in his hands the print of the nails, and see his wounded side, and he says unto me, "Be not faithless, but believing," then I do believe, then I can say, "My Lord and my God," then I cannot disbelieve, then I cannot doubt, or fear; and I think what a poor, silly, weak, doubting creature I am, and wonder that I should be so soon sunk so low after what I have experienced of the faithfulness of God, that I want to be continually receiving fresh favours, and fresh token for good, and to be fed day by day spiritually as well as temporally.

I feel I want daily supplies, and the more I know of the precious love, and mercy, and goodness of God, the more I want to realize the effects in my own soul, and I can truly say nothing else will satisfy but this. But I am often obliged to wait and wait again, and look and long and hope to find the Lord in his house, but find him not. But it is written, "Blessed is he that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors; and whoso findeth me, findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the Lord." And so it is when I do find him; and in his favour there is life, and joy, and peace, and then I gladly receive him because I am waiting for him; and when he cometh he doth bless the sacrifice, and then they eat that are bidden, and sometimes I get such a good taste of the feast, and some of the grapes of Eschal, that I long to go over to the promised land that I may have these good things in abundance that I

have only a taste of here in the wilderness, so that in this respect my labour is not in vain, or my strength spent for nought. I really do feel I love the blessed truths proclaimed, and I do feel it is the house of God, for there the Lord does cause his glorious voice to be heard by me, and I do love to hear his voice in his blessed word. I do think I grow in love with these precious things of eternity, for to me they are of more value than all other things this world can afford; and I do feel that they are not mere phantoms, but realities which I have felt, tasted, and handled, though in a very small measure compared with what I wish to know of them. But I desire to be thankful for what little I do know, for this knowledge is what the world cannot give or take away, and hope to be enabled to hold fast that which I do know, and to be enabled to add thereto as the Lord shall be pleased to teach me by his good spirit, that I may grow in grace and in knowledge of my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, that I might know him in the power of his resurrection and fellowship of his sufferings, and be made comfortable to his death. But the Lord knoweth the desire of my heart is towards him, and the remembrance of his name; and the Lord has said the desire of the righteous shall be granted, and blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness for they shall be filled. And I do know what it is to hunger and thirst for the bread and water of life, and to feel that I am afar off from it and cannot get it, and an outcast in the land of Egypt, afar off from the promises, afar off from peace and quietness, afar off from God, afar off from the Mediator, Christ Jesus, afar off from my Saviour, and to weep when I remember Zion, and to mourn, and to sigh, and to groan, and to say with one of old, "I am shut up and cannot come forth; I am compassed about with gall and bitterness." O that it were with me as in months past, when the candle of God did shine on my head, when the Lord was manifestly with me, blessing me in my going out and coming in; when I could see and feel that the Lord had loved me with an everlasting love, and that with loving kindness he had drawn me to himself, and caused me to hear his voice, and to feel his love shed abroad in my heart by the power of the Holy Spirit, when I felt sweet peace and pardoning blood applied to my conscience; when I did rejoice in the Lord, my soul did magnify the Lord, and my spirit did rejoice in God my Saviour, when I did run in the ways of the Lord with delight. M. M.

A. REMARKABLE DISPLAY OF THE SOVEREIGN MERCY OF GOD, IN THE CONVERSION AND HAPPY DEATH OF A YOUNG MAN, WHO DIED IN THE TWENTY-FIRST YEAR OF HIS AGE.

"The memory of the just shall be blessed." *Prov.* 10. 7.

"It is not of him that willeth, or of him that runneth; but of God that sheweth mercy." *Rom.* 9. 16.

Some time ago an elderly woman came to my door, and asked me if my name was Francis. I said, yes. She said, she was requested to call on me, and request me to be so kind as to visit a young man who was very ill. I consented; and she left his direction and departed.

Having attended to many of these sick and dying cases; and finding, generally, that it was no more than natural conscience alarming them at the approach of death, seeking any where rather than after Jesus, they send for any one that they suppose to be a saint, in order to make him a mediator between God and them; and thus they make their prayer a bridge to bear them over the stream, and know of no better atonement for sin than this. Hence their language is, "Give us of your oil, for our lamps are gone out." I mention not this as an excuse, but as the real ground of my discouragement and backwardness in attending to many calls of this sort that I have had, and do have continually.

This promised visit, through a multiplicity of concerns, and those very feelings, was delayed for perhaps two or three days; when the old woman before mentioned came again to my house, and, after apologizing for troubling me, informed me that the young man was very desirous of seeing me. I interrupted her by making an apology for my non-attendance, and promised her I would be with him soon. I went accordingly; and, upon entering the room, saw a young man, sitting in an arm chair, apparently in a very deep decline. I sat down by him, and conversed very seriously with him about his never-dying soul; and endeavoured, in as plain a way as possible, to speak of sin, its nature and consequences, and also of the way of salvation by Christ Jesus. He listened with great attention, but scarcely said one word. Upon committing him into God's hands by prayer, with all that had been said to him, and about to leave the room, he pressed my hand, and looking earnestly in my face, said, "I hope, sir, it will not be long before I see you again." I replied, "If the Lord please, I will see you soon."

A few days had elapsed after my visit, when I again beheld the old woman making up to my door. She addressed me thus, "Sir, I hope you will excuse my troubling you, but the young man feels very anxious to see you again." I said, "Tell him I will shortly see him." I went, and entered into a long discourse with him. While I was speaking, he several times interrupted me to ask certain questions, which were of such a nature as to revive my heart, and induce me to hope that God had him under his tuition, and that my labour would not be in

vain in the Lord. The inquiries he made were to this effect:—"Whether God ever left his people to spend all their days in sin, and then saved them at last? What real repentance was? How he might know that we were not deluded?" &c. &c. This furnished me with text and sermon, and my tongue was the pen of a ready writer. Moreover, I said in my heart, I shall have no more need of the old woman coming after me, but, if spared, I will see you again soon. I went to prayer with him, and he appeared in heart to join with me. Upon leaving the room, he took me by the hand, and with great earnestness and affection said, "Sir, you will not make it long before you come again?" I answered, "No; if God spare me I will see you very soon."

On my third visit, I perceived his very eyes to brighten on my entering the room. He said, "Sir, I am very glad to see you." I sat down, and discoursed with him; and he opened his heart more freely than he had done before, saying, "I am a poor, sinful, vile young man: I am but twenty years and a half old; but I have spent all these years in sin, and never, till the hand of God was laid heavy upon me, did I feel the least concern about my soul. I will hereafter tell you all about it. At present, if I speak my mind, I cannot help saying (strange as you may think it), I now and then have a little hope, *I, even I*, do sometimes entertain a hope of being saved; and sure I am, that if ever Christ saves such a wretch as I, there can be none in all heaven that will have cause to sing louder. But I have a very important question to ask, which, if you should be enabled to answer, will afford me great relief: it is this—as I before observed, I have a *little* hope now and then breaks in upon my mind, amidst ten thousand fears lest my hope be but presumption; at this time, and when in possession of this hope, I am preparing perhaps to go to rest, and being bolstered up in the bed (for I cannot lie down), I endeavour to commit myself into the hand of God, praying, that if he should take me before the morning, I may be found saved in the Lord. When I feel this hope, I can *pray* and *praise*; *love* and *adore*, and can bear any thing which the Lord lays upon me, continually wondering that I am out of hell; and at times the Lord appears to hear my prayer, and grant me a comfortable night; but the next morning, instead of feeling humble and thankful, and disposed to pray, I often find my heart as hard as a stone, and can neither pray nor praise, though sensibly loaded with favours. Here, then, is my difficult question—Could this happy frame overnight have been from the Lord, and I feel so hard and stupid the very next morning? I said in reply, "My dear friend, before I attempt to answer your question, permit me to

ask you a very plain one. Do you think, supposing that you could retain the happiest frame of mind that ever you had from morning till evening, and from evening again till morning, incessantly and uninterruptedly,—do you think that this would atone for one of your sins?" To which he replied (putting his hand into his waistcoat pocket), "I think this will answer that question." Upon which he presented me with a piece of paper, which I unfolded, expecting to see something in writing, instead of which there was presented to my view a pair of scales. There was in one scale *The broken Law*, and in the other *three tons weight*, as proposed to answer its demand; which he makes to appear so insufficient that the Broken Law weighs the whole up, and is not by any means satisfied with it. Then, turning to the other side of the paper, I saw another.

Struck with surprise, which I endeavoured to conceal, I said, in a seemingly indifferent way, "Who marked out these?" He replied, "I did, sir." I inquired, "What was your motive for doing it?" He answered, "I will freely tell you. My mother, with whom I live, knows not God, nor the way of salvation. I frequently feel a very great concern for her eternal welfare; and as I have expressed to you before, I dare not say I am without hope (wretch as I am) that, by the sovereign grace of God, I shall be saved at last; though this hope is accompanied with a thousand doubts. Wishing to communicate to her, in as plain a way as possible, the whole and sole ground of my hope of life and salvation, it came into my mind the other day, while sitting in my chair, to make use of this simple hieroglyphical representation of the same, that it was not upon the ground of my *prayers*, *tears*, and *repentance*, that I hoped for mercy, but that it was entirely drawn from a hope of interest in the *blood and righteousness of Christ*." At such a testimony as this, my very heart and conscience replied, *Thou art saved*; and I secretly blessed God that I had been called to visit him. Surely this third visit was a sacred one to my soul, nor do I think it was less profitable to him. At length we parted, but not without difficulty; for I hardly knew how to leave him, and he was unwilling to let me go. After committing him into God's hands, which I did with hearty thanksgiving, I left him for that time.

I very soon paid him another visit, when, upon my entering the room, he smiled on me with something of heaven in his countenance; and holding up his hand, which was little more than skin and bone, he exclaimed, "Look at this thin hand, sir; although I appear such a poor, pitiable object, I would not exchange situations with the most blooming youth in the land; for I am persuaded (nor can I help believing it) that this very

body of mine will be eternally glorified with Christ for ever and ever." I replied, "If you were to doubt it yourself, I could not dare to doubt concerning you." We instantly fell into a most profitable discourse, in the course of which he said, "I one day promised to tell you how I first came to have any real concern about my soul. I was bound apprentice to a good man, but was loosely and wickedly inclined, and being very discontented in my situation, I proposed to go to the East Indies. It was at length consented to; I went; and being then far from home, and from under the eye of all my friends, I endeavoured to take my fill of sin, which I did; though at the same time, instead of being happy, my courses brought me in such a crop of misery that I have often envied the brutes their happiness. In this, my sinful course, I took a violent cold, and felt sensibly the seeds of death entering my poor body; but so far was I from repentance, that I think I became more hardened. At length I embarked for England again; and by the time I set foot on the English shore, all probable expectation of recovery was gone. I came home to this house, where you now see me, as far in my heart and affections from God as hell is from heaven. I got worse daily; but, awful to relate, I determined to brave it out, and tried to persuade myself that I should shortly be restored to my health. As a proof of the same, as I was one day sitting in the room, being very ill, I told my mother I would walk to Peckham, which was more than two miles. My mother said, I could not, and I must not, undertake such a journey; and, indeed, at the time, I was hardly fit to be trusted to cross the road by myself. However, I would go; and, some how or other, with much pain of body, reached there; after which, I daringly presumed to walk home; and in returning experienced such pain, that I was strongly tempted to throw myself into a certain water, and drown myself, in order to escape from my misery; but God prevented this. On arriving home I sat down almost dead. After recovering myself a little, I cried out, "Mother, bring me my violin, I will play a tune;" and added, "I shall get well soon, and I will go and see a play." All this, sir, I did to out-brave the thought of death, which was evidently fast approaching.

"I had not long made these speeches before I was seized with a cough, which, though not violent, occasioned the breaking of a blood-vessel; from which instantly issued a vast quantity of blood, flowing from my mouth and nose. The bleeding continued for a considerable time, resisting every application made to stop it. While in this deplorable situation, held up by my friends, the blood still streaming from me, with a dread of hell in my conscience, agitation depicted on every countenance, and

such a quantity of blood already poured forth as it could scarcely be supposed the human body could contain, while all were waiting in expectation that I should presently drop into the cold arms of death, a friend came suddenly in, who, beholding me in this miserable situation, exclaimed, 'O Thomas, cry for mercy! Thousands have, and have been heard too, that have been as vile as you. You cannot be the worse for that, if you are none the better.' Having till then retained my full senses, I heard him, and feeling the force of his words, all over blood as I was, I put my poor hands together, with my mouth and throat full of blood, and lifting up my heart to God, said, 'O Lord, have mercy upon and save a poor dying worm!' when, behold, the moment that I uttered these words the bleeding stopped—I bled no more! I can remember no more;—my senses directly left me; and what further transpired I knew not till about three weeks afterwards, when the Lord was pleased to restore to me the full exercise of my mental powers. From this solemn yet merciful circumstance, I was brought to enquire after a knowledge of salvation; at which time, hearing that there was a godly man living not far off, of the name of Francis, occasioned me to send, and request to see you."

Here I found, in my fourth visit, there was something which crowned all the rest, being the most solemn, awful, and yet animating display of the almighty power, discriminating grace, and boundless love of Him who took the name of Jesus because he would save his people from their sins. May the same gracious and wonder-working Lord be pleased to grant that this little anecdote may be the means of striking terror into the hearts of some that are yet his enemies; that, instead of rushing upon the thick bosses of his buckler, they may, after the wonderful example here set before them, fall into the arms of Him against whom they have sinned, and cry for mercy! Amen. O how richly was I repaid for the time I spent with this young man!

I visited him many times after this, to the joy and comfort of my own soul, and I believe of his also. Just before his death, he named those whom he wished to follow him to the grave; and desired to be buried in Bunhill Fields, because there were in that ground so many monuments of grace like himself, with whom, he said, he hoped to dwell everlastingly. He also told me, that he had requested a particular favour of his executors, that, as he had six hundred pounds coming to him if he had lived six months longer, to have completed his twenty-first year, he hoped they would grant him a head and foot stone, and that he wished nothing on it beside these words,—“Is not this a brand plucked from the burning?” which, I am very sorry to say, was not granted. But, though the all-wise providence of God permitted the denial of the stone, he is able, with his own

pen, to inscribe the same on the table of our hearts, and make the memory of this dear youth the means of preventing the daring and presumptuous sinner from defying Omnipotence, the Pharisee from trusting in his own righteousness; and the poor self-condemned, miserable sinner, to drop into the arms of sovereign mercy, as he did; and prove him to be what he was then, is now, and for ever remains to be—mighty to save, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. Amen.

ENQUIRY.

MESSERS. EDITORS,—Would you give your thoughts upon *Heb.* 18. 21, 22, and 23.

ANSWER TO THE ABOVE.

This 18th of *Ezekiel*, like many more parts of the Bible, can be made to harmonize with the gospel of God only by admitting the difference of the covenant made with the Jews as a nation from that covenant which is by Christ Jesus (see *Heb.* 8. from verse 7th, to the end of the chapter). Unless we are careful to distinguish between these two covenants, we shall make the Bible divide itself against itself (as shall presently be shewn), and so as it were neutralize the whole word of God. The difference between these two covenants is pointed out in the chapter (*Heb.* 8.) above referred to; and if the reader will do himself the favour to go carefully through the 28th of *Deuteronomy*, he will there find set forth the *good* which was to follow upon conformity to that covenant, and the *evil* which was to follow wilful deviation from and violation of that covenant; and as the obedience was to be merely *moral* and ceremonial, so the blessings connected therewith were to be merely temporal, and the evil, though tremendous, was to be also temporal; this covenant being *not* after the power an endless life, but after the law of a *temporal* commandment. This covenant brought them out of temporal bondage, sustained them with *natural* food (the manna), and with natural water from the rock, and brought them into an *earthly* rest; and upon their continued conformity to this covenant, they were to have in this earthly Canaan natural prosperity, all of which was *merely moral and temporal*, except in the *typical* sense; in this sense the old covenant was spiritual, as shadowing forth spiritual things, shadowing forth spiritual things by semblance and by *contrast*; that is, that while the salvation from Egypt, sustentation in and through the wilderness, possession of the promised land, together with the mercy seat, the first fruits, sacrifices, ablutions, peculiarity of food, conquests, and abundance of all earthly good, by the power and favour of God,—while these things, by a faint *likeness* (as far as temporal things can be like spiritual things) set

forth good things to come ; so also they set forth by ~~covenant~~ good things to come, thus :

The deliverance from Egypt was *temporal*, and many of the people that were saved were afterwards destroyed ; but the people saved by Jesus Christ are saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation, and shall not be ashamed or confounded, world without end.

Our fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead ; but he that eateth of that bread which the Saviour gives, shall never die.

Thousands of the Israelites perished by the way, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness, but the sheep of Christ shall never perish.

Moses lost the earthly Canaan, but this did not effect his title to the heavenly Canaan ; his title to the earthly Canaan was by a temporal and conditional covenant, will, or testament ; but his title to the *heavenly* Canaan was by that covenant of which Jesus is the mediator. This new covenant or testament is ordered in all things and *sure* ; in this testament there can be *no final loss*.

When Moses appeared in the Mount of Transfiguration, it was not in the glory of the earthly Canaan (for this he had lost), but in the glory which was heavenly, and endureth for ever.

Eli lost his earthly priesthood, but this did not affect his *heavenly* priesthood ! which heavenly priesthood is not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the *power of an endless life*.

Solomon lost his earthly kingdom, but this did not deprive him of a place in that kingdom which is heavenly, and to be by those for whom it is prepared possessed for ever and ever.

Now as these two covenants thus differ in their nature and end, so each covenant has promises, precepts, invitations, and exhortations, according to its own nature. And all those persons who were enemies to the old covenant, and were destroyed, were a type of empty professors under the gospel, to whom the Saviour will say, " Depart from me, I never knew you."

It was not possible for Adam and Eve, or the Jews, nor is it possible for Christians, nominal or real, to overturn the counsel of God.

The counsel of God in the garden of Eden was this, " The day thou eatest of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt die ;" *implying*, if they did *not* eat thereof, they should live ; so that in either case the counsel of the Lord stood the same.

So with the Jews in their national covenant. The *intention* of that covenant was their good. God had no pleasure in their misery and death, but rather that they should live ; and while

he had chosen them to be the repositories of his truth, and to be the means of keeping up a knowledge of his name in the world, the *intention* of that covenant was to do this by means of their great prosperity attracting us. In the first days of Solomon, the nations around, who came to learn from the wisdom of Solomon, the queen of Sheba among the rest, this was the intention, or rather one part of the intention, of that covenant; and if they should not obey the laws delivered unto them, they were then to be subjected to the judgment written, and their captivity shall be the means of doing that which, if they had obeyed, should have been washed out by their prosperity—that is, of keeping up in the world a knowledge of him who is God over all, blessed for evermore.

And therefore they were exhorted to cast away their idolatries, or transgressions, as the prophet calls their idolatries.

They are exhorted to make them a new heart and a new spirit, which means nothing more than *doing willingly* what they *knew* to be right, and so make up their minds to walk in the Lord's ways, and have by this all the advantages of that covenant. To this they had every encouragement which that covenant could give. The Lord had no pleasure either in their disobedience or its natural consequence, and he was always ready to receive them when they returned to him; and he assured them also that the wickedness which they had committed should not be mentioned (penally) unto them; and so, by the same rule, that the day a man turned from his righteousness and commit iniquity, then his righteousness shall not be mentioned in his favour; he shall die in the trespass which he hath committed.

Such then is the nature of this old covenant, which waxed old and vanished away; yea, taken out of the way, and nailed to the cross.

Of course a great deal of the language of the old covenant does in a *secondary* sense apply to the new covenant; this arises from the old covenant dispensation being a shadow of good things to come.

But how very different are the blessings of the new covenant from those of the old covenant; a new heart and a new spirit, in the old covenant sense, was mere willing-hearted reformation; but a new heart and a new spirit, in the *new* covenant sense, is *regeneration*, an incorruptible seed that liveth and abideth for ever, and is the gift of God, and inseparably connected with all the promises of God, and with all the glory yet to be revealed.

If then we make the eternal welfare of the people of God to rest upon *old covenant* premises, we shall make the Bible divide itself against itself.

That while one scripture declares that he that began the good work will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ, another scripture says that the Lord first *saved* the people out of Egypt, and afterwards destroyed them that believed not; so that here a work was begun, but not carried on.

Again: Jesus hath by his one offering perfected *for ever* all them that are sanctified.

But another scripture shews that the day that a man committed sin, there is an end of his religion, an end of his righteousness; he shall die.

But another scripture saith, "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."

One scripture shews a vineyard ruined and broken up, but another scripture shews a vineyard kept by the Lord night and day, and watered every moment.

The old covenant people lost their earthly Canaan, but God's *new* covenant people shall take the heavenly kingdom given to them, and shall possess it for ever.

The bible is consistent with itself; and that eternal counsel by which cometh eternal life, this counsel, this secret is with them that fear God, and he will shew them his covenant of *sure* mercy. Admit, then, the difference between the two covenants, and the above scriptures will perfectly harmonize.

And it will be seen that the old covenant has no glory by reason of the glory which excelleth; for here in this new covenant, the Lord undertakes to *make* his people *willing* in the day of his power, and also to keep them willing, shewing unto them an everlasting completeness in him who is the head of all principality and power, and also working in them to will and to do that which is well pleasing in his sight; so that they work out (search out) their own salvation with fear and trembling, and go from strength to strength, from help to help; every one of them in Zion appeareth before God.

Eds.

SALVATION OF GRACE.

When first Salvation was designed
 For God's predestined race,
 The Eternal THREE in covenant joined,
 And framed it all of GRACE.

Thus plann'd—the Saviour leaves the skies,
 And takes the sinner's place;
 "'Tis finished,"—on the cross he cries,
 Salvation is of grace.

Not the self-righteous doth he call,
 He sinners came to save :
 The Thief—a Magdalene—a Saul
 To grace the glory gave.

That men of every tongue and name
 The blessing may embrace,
 He sent his servants to proclaim
 Glad tidings, full of grace.

"Ho; every one that thirsts!" they cry;
 "Here wine and milk abound,
 And springs of mercy freely rise,
 Through all the gospel-ground!"

"Come," say the Spirit and the word,
 "The privilege receive;
 Rest your salvation on the Lord,
 And in his name believe."

'Tis not by *works* we come to God;
Faith gives us free access,
 Our only plea the Saviour's blood,
 And perfect righteousness.

Ye scarlet sinners! who have felt
 How desperate is your case;
 Come, with your load of sin and guilt,
 Salvation's all of grace.

Ye that five-hundred talents owe,
 And *law* for pay doth call,
 When brought your poverty to know,*
 Free-grace forgives you all.

Not many noble, many wise,
 Are called God's love to trace;
 He takes the poor whom men despise,
 And makes them heirs of grace.

His sovereign purpose to fulfill,
 And nature's pride abase,
 He mercy hath on whom he will,
 And calls them by his grace.

Ye, who your hope of heaven, alone
 On this foundation place;
 Soon shall you hail the topmast stone,
 With shoutings to it—GRACE!

Manchester.

A PILGRIM.

* Or,—When not a farthing you can show.

THE
GOSPEL AMBASSADOR;
OR,
Christian Pilgrim's Friend.

"Blessed are the poor in Spirit, for their's is the kingdom of Heaven," *Mat. v.3*

"The Election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded," *Rom. xi. 7.*

No. 11.

NOVEMBER 1, 1847.

Price 2d.

THE TRIAL AND ACQUITTAL OF A SINNER, IN THE
COURT OF CONSCIENCE, BEFORE THE JUDGE OF
HEAVEN AND EARTH.

Taken in Verse by "A Pilgrim."

"What things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law; that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God." *Romans, 3. 19.*

"Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." *Romans, 3. 24.*

The following TRIAL is no fiction of the mind, nor dream of fancy, but what took place in the author's conscience, and was as really felt as ever trial was by a criminal when arraigned at the bar of an earthly court of judicature.

If the reader has experienced nothing of what is contained in this trial, however his life may be splendidly adorned with moral virtues, his mind richly stored with natural knowledge, and himself highly esteemed by the religious world, he is yet in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity, and dying in this state, his soul, after its separation from the body, will receive from the eternal Judge the sentence of everlasting banishment into the regions of unutterable woe. But if, happily, he has had the divine law revealed in his conscience, bringing him in as a *sinner*, guilty before God, and condemning him to eternal death; and has heard the gospel sound of salvation, through a crucified Redeemer, these verses will be no mystery to him. Having had his condemnation in this world, that he may not be judged with the wicked in that to come, he has begun that song which he will ever sing, when, with the countless myriads of the redeemed, he casts his crown at the feet of Emmanuel,—
"Unto him that hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, be glory and dominion for ever. Amen."

Cheerful, along sin's flowery path
I walked,—the beaten road to death—
Nor once of danger dreamed ;
Fair rose my morn, my noon shone bright,
My soul looked forward with delight,
So fair her prospect seemed !

As on I went, all nature smiled ;
Till sudden rose a tempest wild,
And darkness closed me round ;
Dire through the gloom red lightnings broke,
I fell beneath the Almighty's stroke,
His arrows deep did wound.

Arrested by conviction's hand,
Against its power I strove to stand,
I strove, but all in vain ;
Its eager hold I sought t'elude,
But still it held, and still pursued,
Nor could I freedom gain.

Myself a prisoner now I felt ;
My soul 'mid gloomy horrors dwelt,
With galling fetters bound :
In the dark pit and miry clay,
My spirit sunk by night and day,
Nor rest nor comfort found.

Into the court of conscience brought,
My every act, and word, and thought,
Before my eyes were placed :
Arraigned, a prisoner at the bar,
I trembling stood, to answer there,
For my transgressions past.

Stern on the bench, the JUDGE I saw ;
The book of God's most holy law
Was opened to my view :
The indictment read—there charged I stood
With breaking the commands of God,
And being traitor, too.

Three witnesses* against me came :
The *world* bore witness to my shame,
And told my follies o'er ;
While *Satan*, with malignant joy,
Against my soul did testify
Of sins a lengthened score.

They swore that I, with heart or hand,
Had broken every law-command ;—
A witness, yet unheard,
That should have stood in my defence,
Against me turned king's evidence,
And all as true averred.

Brought GUILTY in ;—then asked the Judge,
What I, in my defence, could urge,
Or in my favour plead ;
Why on me, fairly tried and cast,
Sentence of death should not be pass'd,
And punishment proceed ?

“ *Guilty* ; ”—I cried, with trembling breath—
“ Should'st thou condemn my soul to death,
I must approve it well ;
I cannot answer, LORD ! for one
Of twice ten thousand sins I've done ;
My just desert is—hell.”

* The world, Satan, and conscience.

Then from the book my JUDGE pronounced
The sentence, that the law denounced
On all that fail therein,
Which was—that I *should banished be*
From God, and die eternally ;
Such curse was due to sin.

No hope of mercy could it give ;
My soul, allowed short while to live,
Before its final doom,
Within me sunk :—heaven's light withdrew,
While hell seemed opening to my view,
And for me gaped the tomb.

Roused by a heavenly report,
Brought by a herald into th' Court,
That One was near at hand,
Who could my soul from death redeem ;
Now broke off hope a cheering gleam,
That did my faith demand.

Just as the joyful sound I heard,
A stranger in the court appeared,
With his attendant train ;
The eyes of all were on him bent,
As through the crowd he prest, intent
Some mystery to explain.

Superior majesty and grace,
And God's own glory, in his face
Were visibly expressed !
Arrayed in garments stained with blood ;
He like a mighty conqueror stood,
And thus the JUDGE address'd,

"Sovereign of heaven, and earth, and seas ;
Inscrutable are thy decrees ;
 And holy is thy law,
Which stands, fenced round with wrath unknown,
To guard the honours of thy throne,
 And keep the world in awe !

"Thy law that can't the guilty spare,
Condemns the culprit standing there ;
 Its justice he doth own :
His sentence all the Court approves ;
And now, O JUDGE ! it me behoves
 To make salvation known.

"Nor do I here, as days-man, stand,
To ask for mercy at thy hand,
 While justice must abate :
The sinner's pardon I don't crave—
As earthly kings their subjects save—
 The law to violate.

"No ;—that on which I ground my plea,
Makes heaven's high attributes agree,
 And hell's design confounds ;
Grace, truth, and righteousness divine,
In his salvation meet and shine,
 And God with glory crowns !

"The sinner, at the bar condemned,
Is in Life's sacred volume named
 An heir of heavenly bliss :
Adopted by eternal love
Into the family above,
 A son of God he is !

“ Chosen in me, in me he stood ;
Him fallen in Adam I fore-viewed :—
 Ere fair Creation rose,
I undertook, in covenant love,
To bear his sins, his guilt remove,
 And raise him from his woes.

“ Heaven’s sovereign purpose to make known,
I stooped from my celestial throne,
 Aside my glory laid ;
From him t’ avert th’ avenging stroke,
Beneath the law that he had broke
 I was in flesh arrayed.

“ Behold me in the sinner’s stead !
When justice for its right, did plead,
 And law fulfilled would be,
I met them both,—obeyed and died ;
Behold my pierced hands and side !
 And set the prisoner free.

“ The law’s dread curse that he’s incurred,
Passive in death, my soul endured,
 That he might never die ;
My spotless life adorned the law,
That righteousness, without a flaw,
 Might him now justify.

“ Without Jerus’lem’s holy gate,
My soul his crimes did expiate,
 And purged his sins as dross.
When death and hell against me rose,
I triumphed o’er his mighty foes,
 And spoiled them on my cross !

“ Though this I’ve wrought, ’twas fit that he
His wretched nature-state should see,
And feel how low he lies,—
“ ’Twas meet that judgment should take place,
That so I might reveal my grace,
And he the mercy prize !

“ My merits in this court made known,
By faith received, and rested on,
His full discharge proclaim !
No condemnation shall he see,
Passed from death to life is he,
Believing in my name.

“ Clothed in my righteousness divine,
He ’mong the sons of God shall shine,
In blissful realms above :
FATHER ! I will that he shall be.
With me in Paradise, to see
The glories of my love !

“ Let justice to my merit done,
Now glorify thy only Son,
And magnify thy name ;
So shall the sinner sound abroad
The truth and faithfulness of God,
And all his praise proclaim.”

Here did my Saviour pause awhile ;—
Then turning said, with gracious smile,
“ Now that the court may know
That none can dare my plea withstand,
The prisoner’s freedom I demand,
Loose him and let him go.

“ Sinner ! now raise thy drooping head ;
See, thine accusers all are fled,
That to convict thee stood !
Thee law nor Satan can condemn,
For cancelled is their every claim,
By my atoning blood.

“ Thou late adjudged by law to death !
To me now lift thine eye of faith,
And thy Redeemer see ;
Eternal life and bliss are thine,
The gift of love and grace divine ;
Arise ! and follow me.”

I heard ; and, at his mighty word,
My chains fell off ;—him I adored,
Whose voice so powerful came :
My soul assured he died for me,
Sprung into life and liberty,
And blest Emmanuel's name !

The JUDGE the awful silence broke,
When my acquittal thus he spoke,
In words of sweetest sound,—
“ Deliver him from penal wrath,
Nor let his soul descend to death ;
A ransom I have found.”

Now in the JUDGE mine eyes beheld
My covenant God in Christ revealed,
And justifying friend ;
The honours of whose law restored,
By Jesus, the incarnate word,
Could now his grace commend.

Amazement through the court had spread,
That he who suffered in my stead,
Should be the JUDGE's Son !
Well-pleased the FATHER heard and smiled ;
Justice and mercy reconciled,
In him benignly shone.

In gratitude did I adore
The Wonderful, the Counsellor,
That well my cause did plead ;
My soul released his praises sung ;
The court with loud hosannas rung,
And hailed me " free indeed."

Jesus my full deliverance brought !
A glorious change the SPIRIT wrought,
Creating me anew.
The world renounced, and sin subdued,
The path to heaven I then pursued,
The crown of life in view.

The day that saw me tried and cast,
When sentence on my deeds was pass'd ;
The day when Jesus saved
My soul from death, my eyes from tears,
Cancelled my sins and quelled my fears,
Is on my heart engraved !

The life that with his blood he bought,
I to his glorious cause devote ;
His service sweet I prove ;
The grace that keeps me, day by day,
Gently constrains me to obey
The gospel of his love.

Long as I live will I proclaim
The honours of Emmanuel's name,
In loud harmonious lays ;
And after death, in worlds above,
I'll hymn the wonders of his love,
To everlasting days.

TWO MITES.

MESSRS. EDITORS,—I have sent a few thoughts as they have been brought to mind, and I have felt some sweetness and comfort in the same, founded on the word of God which we have in *Zech.* 13. 9.

I have found two mites in that blessed portion of God's word—but when I say two mites, I do not mean in a diminutive sense—no, but as the Lord said concerning the widow—she cast in all her living—so I say, here are two mites in the text which is all my living ; one is, *I will*, and the other is, *they shall*. “I will,” saith the Lord, say it is my people ; and they shall say, “the Lord is my God.” This declaration was fixed in the mind of God in eternity, and it was brought forth in the beginning ! We find it in *Genesis* 3. 15, where the Lord said unto the serpent, “It shall bruise thy head.” The sovereign voice of God runs through the whole tenor of his word, and, blessed be his holy name for the same, for who can set forth the value of such a declaration in its accomplishment in the salvation of God towards lost and ruined sinners ? Let the free-willer boast in his self-sufficiency, but let my boasting be in the God of my salvation. O the mercy of God, uswards. Where is the people that would turn unto the Lord were it not for the saving-kindness of God ? There is not a man to be proud—no, not one man has any will of his own to turn from sin unto righteousness—yea, he cannot, for the mysteries of the kingdom are only made known unto them who are heirs of salvation. We read of two mysteries in the word of God—the mystery of iniquity, and the mystery of godliness ; and when the Lord opens the eyes of a sinner, he shows him something of these mysteries. Adam's own federal head knew something about them, for when the devil tempted him to sin, he fell into the mystery of iniquity ; then afterwards he was brought into the mystery of godliness. And all this was brought about by the power and wisdom of him who created all things after the counsel of his own will ; and thus we find, when he had created man, he put him into the

garden to dress it and to keep it, he also gave him a very extensive grant; but in his wisdom he prohibited one tree, by which his ruling and law establishing power was brought into visibility—"In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." Here the Lord set up his statute before the man; but Adam by the influence of the devil, disobeyed, ruined himself and all his posterity, and spoiled the face of creation. *This is a great mystery.*

I have thought sometimes, when meditating on these things, "Why did the Lord plant that tree, or why did he not allow Adam to eat of that tree?" but then I have been checked by this consideration—the Lord has a right to do with his own as seemeth good in his sight; also, if the Lord had made no law, where would be his honour? A God without law would be a God without authority to rule; but the Lord reigneth and ruleth both in heaven and on earth, therefore all are under his ruling power; angels as well as men are bound under law to the Lord and act under the authority of law by the fixation and operation of that "*I will*" and "*they shall*." I believe devils which are fallen angels were cast out of their native standing for disobeying the law of God; for where there is no law there is no sin; but the difference between men and angels is this—while there is redemption for men through the blood of the Lamb, there is no redemption for fallen angels; if so they might have hope, but there is no hope for them, for I believe their sin is that of blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, for they had light to know that Christ was the Son of God, yet they were filled with enmity against him; and we find, when the devil came to Adam in the garden, he came with a lie against the God of all truth. Nevertheless, the holy angels who have kept their first estate are ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation; and they do rejoice in the redemption of the church, and will praise the Lord for ever and ever, not only for the redemption of the church, but for their own preservation also; so that all in glory will praise the Lord—men for redemption, and angels for preservation; and the whole that stand connected with redemption and preservation is couched in that—"I will," and "*they shall*." The Lord hath also said he will refine and try his people; and the operation is by fire, and the effect is, "they shall call on my name;" then, as a manifestation of the Lord's approbation to their call, is—"I will say it is my people," then, in that blessed manifestation, the people will in return say, "The Lord is my God." We here see in all these things the Lord is the Alpha and Omega. I will say, it is my people; not I have said; no, yet that would be a truth, but it stands as a promise, *I will say*; yea, it is a perpetuation, so that we who are called by the Spirit of God are at this time under the blessed operation of that "*I will say it is my people*." The Lord did

say to Israel, as a nation, "It is my people;" but Israel as a nation was not refined as gold, yet the Lord did try them by affliction. But no affliction will change the heart of man unless it be under the operation of God the Holy Spirit, yet the Lord by the hand of correction, did say, "It is my people." But to take the matter up under its refining operation on the heart in a spiritual point of view, is a more blessed consideration; we are not to suppose the Lord will say with an audible voice, "it is my people." No; but by the voice of his Spirit which is felt where it is not heard. And in this we find the words of the prophet verified, wherein he hath said, "He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street." *The work of the Spirit is a secret work on the heart*—the Lord speaks to the heart by his word, and that is the first act of the Lord's saying, "It is my people." He sends his word home with power to the heart of a sinner, and that is sure to make good work, it stops the sinner in his sin and folly—opens his eyes to see against whom he has sinned—and makes him call on the name of the Lord for mercy. Now I believe this is some of the refining work, for the sinner now finds that the works of the flesh are set on fire by the law of God, and it is as a fire in his conscience; he stands before the bar of God—hears the sentence according to law, which is death—he drops and cries for mercy. The Lord, then, in tender mercy looks with a smile of love, and whispers into his very soul and tells him although his sins are deep and many, they are all forgiven. The sinner then can lift up his head and say, "*The Lord is my God.*" The Lord never hath said, this is my people, only by a manifestation of his power, and as soon as the Holy Spirit takes up his abode in the heart, the world, the flesh, and the devil declare war against it; but in the midst of all, that soul will say, by the power of the Spirit, "The Lord is my God;" not only in a verbal form, but by an active and passive obedience to the will of God, *and that is saying indeed*; and such souls are precious in the sight of the Lord I very believe, notwithstanding so great a profession as there is in this our day. Was the Lord to unloose the hand of persecution, we should find but a very few that would stand the fire, and say, "The Lord is my God." For I find but a very few that are honest in the things of God, even amongst those that profess to believe in the fundamental truths of the gospel; they turn about in their profession to suit their worldly circumstances, and if the Lord's children were more faithful to many which say they are Christians, they would find a great number to be but liars. But blessed be the Lord our God, there is a remnant in the midst of all which he will try and refine, and they shall say, "The Lord is my God."

Now to say the Lord is my God, may be taken up under two

considerations ; that is, verbally so, as a confession ; and actively so, by a profession. And when the Holy Spirit takes possession of a sinner's heart, these two features must appear, and while they belong to the children of God, and to them only in their true character. The devil does make a great number of counterfeits, and as long as he can keep them out of the hands of them that are apt to rub them, he gets on pretty well, for the devil's coin will not bear much rubbing, neither will it stand the fire. But that coin which hath the royal impression on it will stand them both, and the more it is tried the brighter it will appear, and the clearer is that inscription discerned, "*It is my people.*" Then those which have the royal impression, when tried, will answer and say, "The Lord is my God."

If there was no real coin there would be no counterfeit ; but there are counterfeits that get into the church of God, and how often are the children of God deceived by them ? some of them are so neatly turned out of the devil's dies that they deceive the church of God for a long time ; but if a church is kept in any way to hang on them, they will surely find them out to the grief of their souls ; and the Lord often tries his people in that way, and by such means he brings his children off from trusting in an arm of flesh, and makes them cry out in the midst of all, "The Lord is my God !" We have great cause to be thankful to our God that we are not placed in the same position as our forefathers were, who had to say, "The Lord is my God," by sealing the testimony with their blood ; *this was a declaration indeed.* Moses, when he left the royal throne of Egypt, and chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, was a voice that was heard through all the land of Egypt. David also, with his sling and stone, did declare the same, and the fall of that monster Goliath was a voice from the Lord which was heard in the camp of the Philistines concerning Israel : "*It is my people.*" And in all ages the Lord hath made himself known the God of power as well as the God of purpose ; and it is well for us to bring the matter home to our own state, and see if the Lord has ever said unto us, "Ye are my people," not by an audible voice, but by the power of his Spirit. I am often obliged to go back to my starting position and see if that which induced me to attend to the things of God, was the voice of the Lord or not ; to be deceived in this matter, is to me an awful state to be in. I am often brought within the boundaries of the apostle's exhortation, 2 Cor. 13. 5, "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith, &c." And, blessed be the Lord, I have always found a sweetness when I have been led to search after the work of God the Holy Spirit in my own soul, for I am sure it was nothing short of that which brought me out of my former state of sin and

blasphemy, and to loathe myself as a sinner in the sight of God, and cry unto him for mercy ; and in my crying unto the Lord I do see the Lord had said unto me, "Thou art mine," because it led me to cry out, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner." Blessed be his holy name, he has said, "Thou art mine ;" and he will say to all his chosen people, "Thou art mine," through this life, and in the time of departure ; and when he shall call them up into eternal glory he will say, "This is my people." And they will say in the fulness of joy, "This is our God."

Dear Messrs. Editors, if you consider there is any thing in these rambling thoughts worth a place in the *Ambassador*, put them in.

Kingston.

D. H.

THE NARROW WAY.

MESSRS. EDITORS,—May truth and peace attend your labours in the publishing of the *Gospel Ambassador*, and I am happy to find the Lord blesses your labours, as I have had more than one testimony of it since the work has been known in this neighbourhood ; I may say several have testified to the truth of what the wise man says, "Iron sharpeneth iron." So a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend ; and, as in water, face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man, *Prov.* 27. 17, 19. So that I think it is a gratification to you to find that your labours have not been in vain in the Lord. I have, like many of the Lord's dear people, been the subject of doubts and fears, and like the Psalmist, I shall fall one day by the hand of this enemy, and like Hezekiah, I shall not see the Lord in the land of the living. But the Lord has been pleased to dispel the thick clouds of darkness, and then with a little faith I can remove the mountain of unbelief through Christ, as Paul says, which strengtheneth me. I have been cheered at times by these words, "Look back, and see all the way the Lord hath led thee through the wilderness." And when the Lord's people look back, they see the Lord has brought them through a wilderness of sin and profession in the narrow path of possession ; and true it is a narrow way, as it is beset on all sides by the different nations, as recorded in *Deut.* 7. I was in London, on a visit, the last week of the past year, and I went to the Surrey Tabernacle on the Lord's day morning, Dec. 27, and doubting in my own mind whether I had part or lot in the great matter of salvation ; but I went into the vestry—they were singing when I got there—after the hymn, Mr. Barnes read part of the above chapter (*viz. Deut.* 7). And the Lord was pleased to meet with me there and broke my heart, and shewed me that I was in the

narrow way which leadeth to eternal life. And after that, I was permitted to have another feast, for Mr. Wells spoke that morning from *Gal.* 4. 6, 7. "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father, wherefore thou art no more a servant but a Son." And if a Son, then an heir of God through Christ; and most blessedly did he enter into my case, for it seemed nearly all for me, and I fully believe the Holy Spirit enabled him to describe my case. I came away from chapel as light as a lark, being enabled to ascertain that I was in the narrow way; but I am apt, like many of the Lord's people, to get between Migdol and the sea, and I was there for some length of time—prayer seemed a burden, and I felt cold and lifeless. Here is the sea before, if I try to go forward I shall be drowned,—here are rocks on the right hand and on the left, there is no escape that way, for Pihahiroth and Baal Zephon are insurmountable barriers, it is impossible to flee; and to make up the measure of distress, here are the Egyptians behind, then I, like Israel of old, murmur, complain, and cry; at length the Lord says, stand still and see my salvation, though you are so enclosed that you cannot flee, your enemies cannot get at you, as these rocks on each side and the sea before prevent them from coming near to hurt you; and besides this, the angel of God which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them, and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face and stood behind them, and it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel, and it was a cloud and darkness to them (Egyptians); but it gave light by night to these (Israelites,) so that the one came not near the other all the night. *Exodus*, 14. 19, 20. What a blessed position is this to be found here; mark well what is declared in that chapter. I assure you this is the way the Lord has set me at liberty, and I trust I can say I am in the narrow way; and again the Lord has declared that the angel of the Lord encampeth round about those that fear him.

I have been rejoiced by these words, to think it says not on one side or the other; neither does it say behind, or before, but round about those that fear him; we are often looking at ourselves instead of looking to God and his promises. I was very much cast down one day, by reason of the way, and the Lord directed me to the former part of *Psalms* 37, and with these words also, "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee;" whereas I had been trying to carry it myself. At another time he was pleased to cheer me with *Psalms* 35, and again he told me there was no weapon that was formed against me should prosper, and every tongue that riseth against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. And we need many of these lifts by

the way, and I can say he has always been as good as his promise. "Thy shoes shall be iron and brass, and as thy days so shall thy strength be." At another time, when doubts pervaded my mind, and as I was looking at *Matthew*, 8. 24, 25, and 26, it dispersed my doubts, "And, behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves; but he was asleep, and his disciples came to him and awoke him, saying, Lord, save us, or we perish. And he saith unto them, why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith. Then he arose and rebuked the wind and the sea, and there was a great calm." When I read these words I was like the poet,

"My heart was changed in that one hour,
My soul confessed his mighty power;
Out flowed the briny tear."

Then shame covered my face, and I began to think within myself what an ungrateful wretch I was to give way to these doubts and fears. But so it was with most of the Lord's people; and as Mr. Osbourn says, this is nothing more nor less than the bad penny returned. Sometimes cast down, if called upon to engage in prayer, to think, because, I cannot pray so well as others, (and wish I could pray like such a one,) I am not in the right way. Sometimes, because I feel so hard-hearted and cannot remember the sermons heard preached, I am not one of the family; then the Lord is pleased to break in and say, "This is the way, walk ye in it." Again he says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." But we are so apt to forget all these blessings when a cloud covers us, then begin to complain again and forget that part of the will wherein it is declared, "in the world ye shall have tribulation, but in me ye shall have peace." But be of good cheer, I have overcome the world, and what is tribulation? if put in the balances with our sins it will bear no comparison. Paul calls them light afflictions enduring for a moment, but shall work out for us an exceeding and eternal weight of glory; may the Lord then enable us to be pressing forward towards the mark for the prize of our high calling of God in Christ Jesus. He tell us in *Romans*, 8, nothing shall separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. But we are often saying, I want to know that my name is written in the Lamb's book of life, and if it is written therein, I should not fear what man could do unto me, and I hardly know whether I am a sheep or a goat; I think I shall be nothing but a goat after all. But the Lord's sheep never were goats, and our blessed Saviour has said, "My sheep hear my voice;" and they follow him through evil and through good report, for they know his voice, and a stranger they will not follow, but will flee from him, for they know not the voice of strangers. It is a great blessing to know

the voice of the good shepherd, for he has laid down his life for the sheep, not for the goats. And Paul says, "even when we were dead in sins, he hath quickened us together with Christ." By grace are ye saved, not as some tell us, it is by our being obedient and performing good works, and the more good works we perform the greater glory we shall obtain; but I never can agree with degrees in glory; if I could do anything to merit greater felicity than others, my proud heart would never allow me to sing that blessed song, "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen." *Rev.* 1. 5, 6. No, I should be singing praise to myself, and say mine own arm hath gotten me the victory. But blessed be his precious name, I shall have no good works to boast of, and therefore I shall be willing to ascribe all the glory to him that hath redeemed me, and therefore I shall be satisfied when I awake up in his likeness, and not till then.

But some have said, "Do you think then you will be like unto Jesus Christ?" I answer, "Yes; and my reason for saying so is, because the holy scriptures declare it. 'Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is, and every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself even as he (Christ) is pure.'" *1 John*, 3. 2, 3. What a blessed testimony is this; so that, Christian reader, this blessed hope here spoken of is necessary for all the Lord's people to possess; and in other parts of the word of God they are called sons of God, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; and, again, he is called our elder brother, a brother born for adversity, and a friend which sticketh closer than a brother; and has he not promised that we shall reign with him, not under him—mark that—and sit down with him on his throne; and when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that putteth all things under him, that God may be all in all, *1 Cor.* 15. 28. There it is fully set forth, I think there will be an equality. There was provision made for man long before the fall, or we should not have the blessed promise made to Adam and Eve, viz., the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head; therefore there was the incarnate Messiah promised as a substitute, who is the person I think referred to in the text. The man is become as one of us, and, I think you will agree with me, this one here spoken of is the promised Messiah, as it does not say *all* of us, but *one* of us. However that may be, it is the way I have had it revealed to me, not by man, as I don't know that I

ever heard it spoken from, neither have I learned those things at college, or an academy, for being brought up of poor parents I had not the privilege of a classical education.

But I must confess this is the way I have been taught by the Spirit, and I therefore leave it for others to judge what spirit I have been taught by, for the Lord has declared that he has loved his people with an everlasting love, and with loving kindness have I drawn thee. And again, he has said no man can come unto him except he is drawn; that will therefore leave no room for free will. I read of one free-willer that went to the gospel feast, but he was clothed with only his own righteousness, which is of the law, blameless, but when the question was asked how he came there, having not on a wedding garment (Christ's righteousness), he was speechless, he had nothing to say, he could plead no good works then; and if ever I get to heaven, I shall have no good works to recommend myself with. The good works spoken of in scripture are quite different to those that are so called now a days. I think one good work is, taking God at his word, as Abraham did, and it was counted to him for righteousness; so there is a twofold righteousness needed by the Lord's people—the first, the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ, the other the righteousness of the saints.

(To be concluded in our next.)

EDITORS' REVIEW.

The Book of Life: being the substance of a Sermon preached at Zion Chapel, Chatteris, on the Evening of May 16, 1847, by W. Palmer; published by request. London: Published by Arthur Hall and Co., Paternoster Row.

With some minor exceptions, this Sermon by Mr. Palmer, in clearness of doctrinal truth, equals any we have ever read—vast and everlasting in importance are the truths Mr. Palmer has here set forth.

The plan of eternal life is his theme, and which, after rather a flourishing introduction, he sets before us the Book of Life, under four distinct enquiries:

I.—The general and figurative idea of a book.

II.—The Book of Life itself.

III.—What is implied by names written therein.

IV.—What are the principal evidences of the fact where the fact exists.

Under the first head, he shews the several different senses in which the word *book* is used in the Scriptures: as,

The book of the generations of Adam, *Gen.* 5. 1.

The book of records of daily occurrences, *Est.* 6. 1.

The book of the law, or writings of Moses, *Deut.* 31. 26.

The book of remembrance, *Mal.* 3. 6.

The book of the living on earth, *Psalms* 69. 98.

The books of judgment spoken of by Daniel.

The flying roll, or book, *Zech.* 5. 1.

The scroll, or roll, or book of the visible heavens, *Rev.* 6. 14.

The volume of the book or body of sacred writings which testify of Christ, *Heb.* 5. 7.

The little book which the angel gave to John, *Rev.* 10.

The book of government with seven seals.

Under the second head, Mr. Palmer sets forth the various reasons why the heavenly book is called the book of life, or what is *implied* in its being called the book of life.

First. Because life is its leading and ruling feature.

Second. It denotes distinguished privilege and honour.

Third. It denotes covenant gratuity standing in the will of the Father, the worth of the Son, and in the work of the Holy Spirit.

Fourth. It denotes life of the highest kind ; it is not animal life, intellectual life, nor moral life *merely*, but *spiritual* life ; not the life of angels, but the life of God, and of the God-man Redeemer.

Fifth. It is life in every suitable form. We have it in the promise of God, in the purpose of God, in the perfections of God, in the covenant, in the cross, and in the conscience, &c. &c.

But this Book of Life (Mr. Palmer goes on to observe) is not only the Book of Life, but the *Lamb's Book of Life*.

First. Because the Lamb is one of Christ's *emblematical* names. The type of a lamb includes a peaceful idea ; he is both our peace and peace maker.

Second. Because it involves a sacrificial idea ; he was led as a lamb to the slaughter.

Third. Because, as the typical lamb was *bound before* it was slain, and in order to its being slain, so Christ was not only appointed to die, but *bound* to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.

Fourth. Because this eternal life is identified with the sacrificial work of Christ, flows through and is enjoyed with it.

Fifth. Because the persons therein named are the *property of the Lamb*.

Sixth. It is the Lamb's book of life, because it is in the keeping and custody of the Lamb.

Seventh. It is called the Lamb's book of life, to suggest the exhibition of Christ in the gospel.

And, finally, it is the Lamb's book of life, in as much as the

phraseology may denote the *foundation, extent, and permanence* of his mediatorial glory.

Under the third head, Mr. Palmer notices what is implied in the *act* of writing names in the book of life.

First. Foreknowledge—"Thine eyes did see my substance ; yet being imperfect, and in thy book, all my members were written," *Psa.* 139.

Second. It implies a personal sovereign and eternal election of them ; it implies election, because it is taking some and leaving some.

Third. It involves the idea of ancient adoption.

Fourth. It suggests the idea of *divine predestination*.

"But their being in the Lamb's book of life, suggests another class of ideas, connecting the objects more immediately with Christ."

First. It indicates an *irreversible donation* ; "thine they were, and thou gavest them me."

Second. It conveys the notion of suitable provision.

Third. It involves the idea of *specific salvation*.

Fourth. *In* the book of life, signifies, I apprehend, *indissoluble union* to Christ as covenant head.

Under the fourth and last head, Mr. Palmer notices the *evidence* of interest in this book of life, and brings forward a great number of scriptures to shew that regeneration and indwelling life, truth and grace, are doctrines of the Bible, and essential to salvation, to the soul's welfare, and to the glory of God. These points he very clearly establishes.

Such is the outline, the scope and general drift of this sermon by Mr. Palmer, of Zion Chapel, Chatteris, Cambridgeshire.

Most glorious and delightful are the truths set forth in this sermon—truths which are known but little of, and preached but little, and sought but little, and but lightly esteemed by many who profess to love them. We are, therefore, glad to see Mr. Palmer come out so fearlessly and decidedly for the sovereignty of God, the perfection of the Saviour, the work of the Holy Spirit, the privileges of believers, the dignity of Zion, the dominion of mercy, the pre-eminence of saving grace, and final possession of the kingdom by all the chosen, the redeemed, and called and sanctified of God ; for, after all, it is the truth which makes us free. We are sanctified through the truth, our souls are purified in obeying the truth, and our loins are to be girded with truth, and the homage of that heart is not accepted of God which has in it no place for the truth. God desireth truth in the inward parts, and all must be lost who receive not the love of the truth ; and shall we say that Mr. Palmer is not *one in heart* with the holy and blessed truths he has advanced in the sermon now lying before us ? We should *not* like to say so—yea,

we cannot believe but that he does supremely love the truths he has advanced. We can, we think, give freely our opinion of this sermon without unchristianizing Mr. Palmer, but perhaps not without offending him.

He has, as we have said, advanced the essential truths of the gospel, and so far we glory ; but his *mode* of advancing those truths (taking this sermon as a specimen) is not likely to render his ministry very useful.

The complaints we have to make of this sermon are these :—

First. There is a *want* of simplicity.

Hence, when he would inform us *that all things must be subjected to that order upon which Jehovah in counsel has determined*, he must express himself by a mighty play, and, as it were, a *giddy dance* of words. Thus, on page the second,

“Consequently a measure intended to operate these results, must by necessity be profound in principle, grand in the outline it presents, and specific in its minutest details. No heterogeneous elements, no discordant interests must be admitted ; excess and deficiency must be alike unknown ; while the nicest proportion in all the parts—the finest adjustment of each part to the whole, with an exact amount of efficiency and skill to conduct the operations, are necessary.”

Here are seventy-four words artfully thrown together, containing but a very small amount of real meaning. Such an unsparing use of almost unmeaning words and sentences may amuse the itching ear, but will fall with hardly the weight of a feather upon the ungodly, and be as chaff to the living in Jerusalem. Such creature wisdom of words rather hinder than not the gospel of Christ.

Second. As there is a want in this sermon of simplicity, so also there is a want of ease ; hard intellectual labour is manifest in almost every page, and savors more of head *contrivance* than *heart experience*. We do not hereby mean that Mr. Palmer has *no experience* of the truths he has advanced, but we mean that intellectual labour shows itself in this sermon much more prominently than a tried and exercised heart ; and the reader, as he goes through the sermon, partakes of that fatigue which Mr. Palmer felt in getting this sermon up, and gathering together and throwing in such a vast multitude of scripture references. There is in the first paragraph, on page 24, nearly fifty references, and which most readers, we suppose, pass over. As these laboured sermons have much of their origin in mere intellectual speculation, so they consequently fall short of doing much good.

There is also a want of power ; it does not *fully* strike home to the inward feelings of the heart ; all going to shew that there may be very great intellectual powers, good and great natural

acquirements, yet very *little* spirituality. Thus it is, in this sermon, a natural, wordy sort of talent is clear and striking, and the truths advanced of vital importance, but the *spiritual feeling* by which they are advanced is so hidden, and at the same time so feeble, that the reader is at a loss to know whether it exists or not.

And in addition to the foregoing faults, there is one essential matter which Mr. Palmer seems, all through his sermon, all but to have lost sight of, and that is, the *needs* be there is for the truths he has advanced—

Why has Mr. Palmer omitted to shew from what arose the *necessity* of a book of life? Here was the place to shew up the direfulness of our fall in Adam; here he might have clearly shewn that nothing but eternal election could reach us; for, being by the fall, dead and separated from God, here we must have laid—here we must have continued, but for election, together with all spiritual blessings being bestowed according to that election; for the doctrines of the gospel are to be received, not as expressive merely of facts, but the *vital necessity* there is; for those truths must be known and felt, or else they cannot be rightly received, nor duly appreciated. We have no doubt but many hold the doctrines as expressive of certain facts, but at the same time do not either see or feel the absolute necessity of those truths; hence these truths do not become the life, and hope, and delight, and glory of such persons; they do not find these words of truth and eat them; they do not rejoice at the truth as one that findeth great spoil; the truth is not unto them spirit and life, but a mere dry statement of facts; and hence it is that such are dead and dry doctrine preachers and professors.

Again: Why has not Mr. Palmer shewn up more clearly the *necessity* of the mediatorial work of Christ? Could he not have shewn the relative, the preceptive, and penal hold which the law of God has of us in the first Adam, and so have shewn how by the substitutional work of Christ our legal or first Adam relation is dissolved—*how* the Saviour brought his people to the end of the precept, and then to the end of the penalty of the law, and thus leave the sinner nothing to stand upon in his relation to the first Adam? The Saviour is thought and made but little of by those who never saw and felt themselves lost. It is the poor and *needy* who shall praise the name of the Lord.

Agaid: Why, in setting forth the work of the Holy Spirit, does Mr. Palmer all but leave out one essential part of the Holy Spirit's work, viz., *convincing of sin*?

Perhaps this may be partly accounted for by aiming to avoid that dunghill system with which some seem so much delighted,

preaching and talking of hardly anything but the devil and their own hearts; not that this is anything to be wondered at, for as they live chiefly in company with their own snarling dispositions and the devil, they have not much to speak of but that which they see in their own territories.

Bitterness and slander are the most prominent features in their character; and yet, with all their humility, they are in their *own* eyes the most wonderful saints in the world. This is that morbid mindedness, that quagmire, that whirlpool, which Mr. Palmer has been careful to avoid; but thus avoiding Caribdis, he has all but fallen upon Sylla, and has left all but untouched that conviction of sin which is wrought by the Holy Ghost in the hearts of his people. The fountains of the great deep within become broken up, the innumerable multitude of evils proceeding from the heart are seen and felt, and here lies the plague, the pestilence, and the famine—here are the worm-wood and the gall, here the loathsome disease, here the law in the members, here every evil thing—here helplessness, darkness, misery, poverty, and wretchedness abound—here idolatries continue to be carried on, not willingly, but against the renewed will; here it is we groan, being burdened, here the flesh is the flesh still; and though the workings of sin do not evidence life, yet a *consciousness* of these workings of sin—humiliation before God, thereby seeking after the needed mercy, crying out under it, O Lord, I am oppressed, undertake for me.” This working of conscience under sin is an evidence of life. A sight and sense of vileness, poverty, blindness, ruin; together with a living desire unto the Lord, and to the remembrance of him, with now and then a little help, just enough to keep them from despair, are all the evidence many of the children of God have; it is with them the day of small things, and they are exceedingly tried with the infidelity and other evils of their own heart.

Mr. Palmer's description of the work of the Holy Spirit savours so much of the mere letter and so little of the real *spirit* of his work, that these feeble ones in Zion are passed by; and if they speak of the deficiency they find in such a sermon as this of Mr. Palmer's, they are immediately called *corruptionists*, and charged with taking the workings of sin as an evidence that they are Christians; but this is judging them with unrighteous judgment. These are not corruptionists any more than Huntington and Hawker were corruptionists. No; these are the poor and needy, and *sincere*; and therefore, if Mr. Palmer in his ministry pass them by, it is no wonder they should pass him by, especially as his ministry reacheth not *unto* them, much less to the regions *beyond* them. And after all, the plague of the heart is an *every day* matter; and the ministry that refuses to

range over the desert, to pry into caves and dens, and prisons and dungeons—the ministry that falls short of this, is not very likely to bring again that which was driven away—to strengthen the diseased, to heal the sick, to save that which was lost, or to open the prison house to the prisoner, or bring the captive up that he should not die in the pit. The minister who is too haughty for this kind of work, is more unmerciful in this respect than the monster whale of the deep, for though he first swallowed up Jonah, he did at last bring him up from the deep and place him safe upon dry land; but some preachers and professors are not accustomed to do business in deep waters, and therefore have no sympathy with the afflicted and tempest-tossed, nor any mercy for the man who falls among thieves.

This sermon of Mr. Palmer's was sent to us with the request that we would give it an *impartial* review—we have done so.

And our conclusion is threefold.

First. That Mr. Palmer is a good man, but too much led away by natural acquirements, fleshly wisdom, and attempted excellency of speech, and whereby he throws hinderances in the way of his own ministry.

Second. That in his antipathy to a system of corruption preaching, he goes to the other extreme, and leaves out many things which would tend to undeceive the deluded, and at the same time help the feeble-minded and tried of the Lord's people.

Third. That notwithstanding these drawbacks, he is useful to some, and therefore not to be despised or treated as an enemy, but to be admonished as a brother, that he may be encouraged to recede more and more from that which is *not* gospel, and to abound more and more in that which *is* gospel; knowing that the most consistent of men are not without their faults, infirmities, deficiencies, and superfluities. Who can understand his errors? With the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption; and hereby it is that all shall be made straight at last.

Eds.

ENQUIRY.

DEAR MESSRS. EDITORS,—Is believer's baptism an article of Christian faith, as they are so intimately connected together? "He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved, &c." And in another place it is declared, "What God hath joined together, let no man put asunder." If you or any of your able correspondents will answer the same, it will greatly oblige,

AN ENQUIRER.

THE
GOSPEL AMBASSADOR;
OR,
Christian Pilgrim's Friend.

"Blessed are the poor in Spirit, for their's is the kingdom of Heaven," *Mat. v.3*

"The Election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded," *Rom. xi. 7.*

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"WHAT IS TRUTH?"

Truly an important question, and one difficult to answer to the full extent of the meaning of the word, seeing that it comprehends within itself, eternity, infinity, immutability, and infallibility,—yea, all the perfections peculiar to Jehovah. The brightest created intelligence on earth, being but finite, fallible, and mutable, can contemplate truth only in its parts, and how small a portion can it understand?

Few have sailed across the mighty oceans that engirdle the earth; fewer still have traversed them hither and thither to behold their width and extent. Those who have seen most of them, have seen only their surface; none have descended into their depths, to explore the hidden regions that lie beneath. Hence the Lord's question to his afflicted servant Job, "Hast thou entered into the springs of the sea? or hast thou walked into the search of the deep?" If a small portion of the creation of God cannot be searched out, how much less shall the God of creation be searched out to perfection? To comprehend the whole truth, therefore, is to comprehend God, for God is truth.

The truth, however, is to be known by the children of truth, and liberty to be experienced by it. "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." So said the mouth of truth itself with reference to those who were disciples, not in word, or by profession simply, but disciples indeed. The truth then, although it passeth knowledge, is to be known, in the same sense as the love of Christ is capable of being known, as spoken of by Paul to the Ephesians, who by being rooted and grounded in love, "May be able to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth and length, and depth and height; and to know

the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God."

It is the ardent, unfeigned desire of those who have been quickened, and are led by the spirit of truth, to find out this matter from day to day, and their cry is, "Shew me thy ways, O Lord: teach me thy paths; lead me in thy truth, and teach me."

Vain is all our searching after truth, if not led and guided by the spirit of truth; but if so led, we shall be conducted to the fountain, to the only source of truth—that fountain being God himself. God the Father is truth; God the Son is truth; and God the Holy Ghost is truth. "A triune God, distinct in persons, yet in essence one incomprehensible."

What one is, that also is the other. Jehovah, the Lord of hosts, the Lord God, the Lord of glory; the Lord of all; the true God; the First and the Last; the self-existent I am; the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.

Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord! one in power, one in wisdom, one in glory, one in all the purposes of salvation, creation, providence, and grace.

This is the fountain head of truth, whence flow all those streams of truth that make glad the city of God, giving life, health, peace and plenty wherever they run.

His will is one, it is eternal. What he now wills, he willed from eternity. What he willed in eternity, he will perform in the time and in the manner, that shall be in strict accordance with his dateless purpose. "He doeth as he will among the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth."

He willed to cast down rebellious spirits from the realms above, and confine them in the deeps of hell for ever: and he willed to save in himself, with an everlasting salvation, rebellious men, and make them heirs of himself, heaven and glory to eternity. These things he has done, and hath moreover been pleased to bind himself by solemn engagement purely voluntary, to preserve them through all the vicissitudes of time, and make them acquainted with themselves and him. And because he could swear by none greater, he swore by himself, saying, "I will be their God, and they shall be my people." Thus is he shewn to be a covenant God, and the counsels of his covenant are faithfulness and truth. The formation of this covenant was the fruit of love divine, and when formed it secured the exercise for ever of love eternal, to millions of the human family as yet unborn. The eternal Father loved the people with an everlasting and unchanging love, a love that no circumstances could destroy, and that no floods of sin and guilt could drown.

By the appellation Father, here, I do not conceive of one

person in the glorious God-head apart from nor even distinct from the word and the Holy Ghost, in the eternity of this love; but rather regard the form as comprehending the glorious trinity in indescribable unity. "God is love;" and what he is in himself, he is to his people, in consequence of that indissoluble union that subsists between them and the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. How great an expression of love divine is that which could place the people in such a position, as to give rise to such gracious words from the lips of the blessed Lord in his address to his heavenly Father—"I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved me." Here the people thus blessed have a dwelling eternally secure, in the rock of ages, in the secret place of the Most High. In this truth they of old rejoiced, saying, "Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations; before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God." Even the covenant God of truth.

In the formation of this wonderful covenant was Jehovah Jesus as the wisdom of God, and his delights were with the sons of men, contemplating a kingdom that he would establish, even an everlasting kingdom; the throne of which should be truth, its sceptre a right sceptre; its laws, laws of truth and peace.

This covenant of truth is therefore a covenant of peace, because it had for its object the establishment of peace, in this kingdom of Christ Jesus, and the destruction of war, to the end of the elect earth; the swords and spears of hostility to the sovereignty of God in his plan of salvation and universal government of the world, are hereby turned into implements wherewith to labour in the fields of Gospel truth in the appointed season. "The counsel or covenant of peace shall be between them both."

The great executor of the details of this covenant comes forth in his mediatorial dignity, as the qualified peace maker, to render to justice all its due, and hush the thunders of the righteous law, not by any compromise short of exact fulfilment of the precept and entire endurance of the penalty, but went to the end of the law and made peace by the blood of his cross. So that hereby this covenant of truth unfolds itself as a covenant of blood. To remit the sins of sinners, was an important part of the counsel of peace; but without shedding of blood, there is no remission. The Lord of life, therefore, undertook to redeem, and this he did most gloriously. "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God." "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of

the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage." So that by shedding his precious blood, full remission of sin is effected: the price of redemption paid, prisoners are set free from the pit of destruction, from the pit of corruption, from the pit of bondage and misery, and ultimately from the pit or prison of mortality itself. "By the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water," of truth, of life, and of peace. "Tis by virtue of this precious blood that the children are brought out of the pit of nature in regeneration." ("Look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged,") and also out of the many pits into which they subsequently get, such as the pit of unbelief, of carnality, of hard-heartedness, and others out of which they could never get, to draw near to the Lord, brought nigh alone "by the blood of Christ." Not only are they brought out of these prison houses, but prevented by the same means from going down into the prison of hell. "Deliver his soul from going down into the pit, for I have found a ransom;" even the peace speaking blood of him who is the mighty God, the everlasting father, and the prince of peace.

This covenant of truth then being a covenant of peace, of blood, of redemption, also of mercy, of grace, of safety, of plenty, and of promise; and the mercy is that "He is abundantly willing to shew unto the heirs of this covenant of promise the immutability of his counsel that was held in eternity, and developed in time, securing all the blessings needed for ever and for ever." These important matters are evidently hidden from the wise and prudent, but the Lord in his mercy hath revealed them unto spiritual babes. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will shew them his covenant."

Truth is seen in the necessity that exists for the unfoldings of this covenant to the sons of men. "Let us make man," said the eternal three. ("We are the clay, and thou our potter.") The great potter wrought a work upon the wheels of Providence, produced a vessel good and upright, and without a flaw, placed it in his garden, and pronounced it very good. Satan, under pretence of improving the workmanship of God as he basely insinuated, spoiled the whole, and made a mere potsherd of the man incapable of containing the waters of life and peace that flow from the throne of God.

Thus have all the posterity of Adam become like him, mere potsherds. ("Let the potsherds of the earth strive with the potsherds," &c.)

Pride and ambition (the condemnation of the devil) did he

artfully inject into the nature of our great progenitor. He hath only made you human ; attend to my instructions, " Eat of the tree ; ye shall then be more than human, ye shall be as God. Hath he said, ye shall surely die ? Ye shall not surely die ! Regard not his authority ; rather regard mine. Never mind his wisdom, mine is superior." (As it was in the beginning, is now, and will be to the end of time. Whatever is opposed to the word of God, is of the devil, and is not the truth.)

Alas for the result of attending to the tempter's speech. That which before was good and true, is now untrue and evil ; that which was straight and pure, is now crooked and defiled. He that could heretofore, unalarmed, hold converse with his master, now flies from his presence with dismay, under the influence of an evil conscience.

Thus by one man's disobedience, were the sluice gates of sin, corruption, disease, and death, opened wide. The posterity of Adam have been inundated from that time to the present with the deluge of ungodliness, and with all the miseries attendant on the same.

Would we ask for a practical comment upon these truths, let the facts of the present day supply it. Of the nine hundred millions of our fellow creatures that inhabit this terrestrial planet, above six hundred millions of them are engulfed in the vortex of delusion, under the names of Hindooism, Boodhism, Lamaism, and Mahometanism. So that not even a third part of the population of our globe, acknowledge the name Christ even in the letter ; and there are parts not a few in which for a man to avow himself a Christian, would be, for the inhabitants of those parts, a sufficient warrant to deprive him of his life.

Add to these also the thousands in Christendom calling themselves Christians, under the names of Roman Catholicism, Socianism, and other free will and truth opposing systems, evidently having the devil for their founder. With a view of these things, the question, " What is truth ?" and " Where is truth ?" become all important ; while the facts themselves are a solemn exemplification of that beautiful contrast as expressed by the lip of truth, " YE ARE OF GOD, LITTLE CHILDREN, AND THE WHOLE WORLD LIETH IN WICKEDNESS."

Is it a truth that the Lord Jesus Christ is the only Saviour ? Yes ! For " there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." Are all those lost who die destitute of a knowledge of this name, and of faith in him ? Yes ! for it is written, that Jesus said to such as consecrated their powers to oppose the truth of God, " Ye shall die in your sins. If ye believe not that I am, ye shall die in your sins ;" at the same time, referring them to their original influencer

in their opposition to truth, said, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lust of your father ye will do; he was a murderer from the beginning and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own, for he is a liar, and the father of it; and because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not." Then it is a truth, that to be a creature simply, and not to be a Christian, is a calamity and a sore evil. Better never to have been born, than to be, and return unchanged. Well might some of old exclaim, under apprehensions of these things, "Why died I not from the womb," &c.

The truth of the certainty of the misery of the lost: we have seen, but the mercy of the saved is here. "There is a remnant according to election," according to that covenant which is ordered in all things and sure. There is a remnant for which eternal love has been exercised, on whose behalf eternal wisdom has been displayed.

A remnant to secure whom, eternal and Almighty power has been put forth, and eternal faithfulness exhibited. The creation of worlds, and the sustaining them in motion and order, are but trifles in the estimation of Jehovah, when compared with the salvation and welfare of this remnant. Bless the Lord, O ye people, that there is a remnant; bless the Lord, O my soul, for a good hope through grace, of being a fragment of that remnant.

Take away this foundation, and there remains no basis upon scripture premises, for a sinner's hope of safety here, or bliss hereafter. For "except the Lord of Hosts had left us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrah;" that is, "set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire;" having part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone; driven out from life, from hope, from happiness, into companionship with demons, and the spirits of lost men. The great act of God therefore that secures souls from so great a death, and gives an interest in atoning blood, even election, is a truth, and a glorious one, and the denier of the same is a robber, for he would rob God of his glory, and a child of God of his comfort.

Satan did succeed in throwing down our first parents from their primeval rectitude, and doubtless triumphed in the act. But the triumphing of the wicked is short; and even here

"Satan was nonplussed in what he had done,
The fall wrought the channel where mercy should run,
In streams of salvation that never run dry,
And all for the lifting of Jesus on high."

For behold, truth appears in our world: an angel announces him. "Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which:

shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you. Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, and laid in a manger." Never did a stable receive so great a guest, or men so great a gift.

"Thanks be unto God for his *unspeakable* gift." Truth, like the rising sun, began to dart its golden beams upon our benighted world. "The people which sat in darkness saw great light: and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death, light is sprung up." This light is seen in the wisdom of his mouth. For "never man spake like this man." In the power of his arm, "no man can do the miracles that thou doest except God be with him." Sin had blinded man's eyes, stopped their ears, crippled their legs, fastened their tongues, devils possessed their faculties, and death itself had them in its grasp. But truth and holiness being thus manifested in opposition to sin and falsehood, the eyes of the blind are opened, the ears of the deaf are unstopped, the lame man is made to leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb to sing. The dead are raised to life, and lepers are cleansed. The voice of truth is blessed; it is heard in the synagogue, saying, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor," &c. This voice of truth commands a Lazarus to come forth, and he does so. The sea of Galilee may toss its angry waves threatening death to the voyagers, and destruction to the ship; but no sooner is the voice of truth pronounced, Be still! immediately there is a great calm.

The voice of truth is powerful, it is full of majesty, it breaketh the cedars of Lebanon; the tall and towering opposer it breaks down into humility and fear. Truth is the axe that is laid to the root of the tree, as a preparatory step to its being made use of in the temple of the Lord, "where every one doth speak (exclusively) of his glory." The voice of truth also divideth the flames of fire. "Is not my word as a fire?" saith the Lord. Yes, every truth of the gospel is a flame, every promise is a flame proceeding from the throne of God, and the voice of the Lord divideth these, severally, as he will. To that poor soul that is trembling on account of his darkness, and fearing that his name is not written in heaven, this flame cometh. "I have graven *thee* upon the palms of my hands;" "I will never leave *thee*, I will never forsake *thee*." To another, feeling his sin and misery, and fearing the chastening hand of the Lord, "their sins and iniquities I will remember no more." Blessed flames these, that not only burn up the sense of sin, but set fire to the affections and cause the soul to burn with love to him that thus remembers it in its low estate.

No matter how deep soever buried, this voice will bring it up; how far soever off, it will bring it near; and no marvel, when it is remembered that it is the same voice that said, Let there be light! at the first creation; and there was light. Let the dry land appear! and it was so.

Incarnate truth condescends to stand at the bar of a Roman judge; and in giving an account of himself, declares that his mission is, to develop the truth to the sons of men. That he came into the world to bear witness of the truth, and said furthermore, that "Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice." Pilate not knowing and not wishing to know the truth, said in a careless manner, "What is truth?"

There is something significant in the silence of our Lord, for he never spoke without a purpose, nor kept silence without a reason. No answer was given. The elements of a suitable reply, however, were contained in the question; for the question, in the language in which it was spoken, stands thus, "*Quid est veritas?*" "What is Truth?" If the letters composing this sentence be transposed, or placed in a different relationship with each other, they form the following sentence in the same language, "*Est ver qui ad est.*" "It is the man who is present." Without attaching undue importance to the coincidence itself, it evidently does not contradict, but rather tends to confirm the well established fact, that the Lord Jesus Christ is indeed the truth, and the quickened and spiritually enlightened children of God are well grounded in this truth, from the testimony of the Holy Ghost revealing that scripture with power, which the lips of Jesus himself uttered, "I am the way, the truth, and the life."

They know him to be the only way, from death to life, from darkness to light, from bondage to liberty, from earth to heaven, the ladder that Jacob saw in vision, and which John declares shall be seen by others—"Hereafter ye shall see angels ascending and descending on the Son of man." He is the truth of the law, for in him all its claims are met, all the breaches of it repaired, its authority acknowledged and honoured. "I came not to destroy the law, but to fulfil it." He is the truth which justice alone can be satisfied with, since the perfections of Jehovah can harmonize only, as he paid to justice all its due, and left mercy free and unshackled in the exercise of it, on the objects of eternal love, through him. He is the truth of the prophecies. Inspiration pointed the finger of prediction to him. The rays of glorious truth, even before the luminary had actually arisen, shone forth gilded with its beams, the ceremonies giving meaning and significance to the whole. Adam saw him as the promised seed; Abel as the antitypical lamb; Noah as the place of safety in the storm; Abraham as the substitutional

sacrifice ; Moses as the prophet and high priest of our profession ; David as the King upon the holy hill of Zion ; Isaiah saw him as the wonderful, the counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, and the prince of peace, as well as " the son born and child given," and testified of him accordingly.

Not only is he the truth of the prophecies, but also he is the truth of the promises. He is the sum and substance of them. " They are yea and amen in him," because he is faithful that has promised. Faithfulness is the girdle of his reins ; every one that is brought into newness of life ; every one that receives a gleam of light from the Sun of righteousness, as a manifestation of divine favour, he is so far a witness to the truth of the promises of the Gospel ; and when under the blessed anointing of the Holy Ghost, bringing home the truth with power to his soul, having received the truth in the understanding, truth in the affections, truth in the judgement, truth in the conscience, truth in the memory, truth in the will,—having thus tasted and handled the word of truth, he can in some measure know what the truth is. Having thus received it in the love of it, in the power of it, in the sweetness of it, in the joy of it, and in the anticipation of a full realization of it in heaven above, where truth in triumph and without a rival reigns where ; the river of truth, with all its glorious streams, makes glad the city of God ; where falsehood, deceit, and hypocrisy are for ever excluded ; where justice and holiness, love and mercy, power and glory, all unite with surpassing brightness to produce that state of things that God has prepared for them that love him. God desireth truth in the inward parts, and what his soul desireth that he doeth ; therefore he will inscribe his truth in the hearts of all his people in accordance with his declaration, " They shall all know me," for " He the spirit of truth, shall guide you into all truth," whether doctrinal, experimental, or preceptive. The truth of native helplessness, entire depravity, and the need of such a Saviour as is revealed, and lead on into a knowledge of salvation by him, enlist the soul into the service of King Jesus as a soldier of the cross ; give the girdle of truth for the loins, breastplate of righteousness, shoes of the gospel of peace, shield of faith, helmet of salvation, the sword of the spirit, and a banner with truth inscribed on it, that it may be displayed because of the truth.

Swanscombe.

I. C. J.

THE NARROW WAY.

(Concluded from page, 258.)

Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye can in no case enter the kingdom of

heaven. Rahab's was a good work, because it was done in faith; Joel's was a good work; so that I say they were quite different to what are so called in the present day. The Lord's people are a special people, a peculiar people, zealous of good works. This is the way I have been led on, having a good hope, through grace, that the Lord hath predestinated me to the adoption of a son, for whom he did foreknow he also did predestinate, to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren; moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

What shall we then say to these things—if God be for us, who can be against us? There is no power can hurt us—there is no man can destroy us, for all things he worketh according to his divine will, for he hath declared the end from the beginning, and to him there is nothing new under the sun. Then who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth? Shall man condemn them? we know they will say all the evil they can of the Lord's people—they may call us mad—they called our master so before us—they said he had a devil and was mad; they may call us Antinomians—they called Paul and the apostles the same. Why yet am I also judged as a sinner, and not rather as we are slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say, let us do evil that good may come, whose damnation is just? *Rom. 3. 7, 8.* And if they do these things in the green tree, what will they do in the dry? therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, immoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord. I have here stated a few things as I have had them revealed to me, which I have reason to thank him for that is too wise to err, and too good to be unkind. Though it may be called a narrow way, yet I believe it is the right way, and I may be called narrow-minded, but this is my belief.

“ I'm not ashamed to own my Lord,
Or to defend his cause;
Maintain the honor of his word,
The glory of his Cross.”

I cannot therefore believe I have not learned Christ aright while I have so many portions of scripture on my side; Christ died for his own sheep, and not for the goats, for he hath said, “He will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and compassion on whom he will have compassion.” And I say with Newton:—

“ And can he have taught me to trust in his name,
And thus far have brought me to put me to shame.”

No, for he is faithful to his word, and not one jot or tittle of his word can fail; therefore search the scriptures and see if these things are so. I remain, yours in the bonds of the everlasting covenant,

Two Waters.

H. H.

COPY OF A LETTER, WRITTEN BY THE LATE MR. GADSBY, TO HIS FLOCK AT MANCHESTER.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS,—In the bonds of a covenant keeping God, may grace, mercy, and peace be with you, and the God of peace live and rule in your heart, and by the matchless power of God, the Holy Ghost communicate to your souls grace from Christ, according to your needs, and may you more fully enter into the glorious mysteries of God and of the Father and of Christ. I know well that the dreadful mystery of iniquity makes some of us sick and groan, being burdened. O what horrible workings of filth does my poor soul sometimes feel. Describe it sir, say you; no never, I dare not tell you half, and sure I am that no mortal living could tell the whole; there is an infernal depth in it which bids defiance to all the human race either to fathom or describe, and every day gives a fresh opportunity for it to shew up more and more of its indescribable nature, and its horrible rebellion against a kind and gracious God. O my dear friends, what a matchless mercy it is that our God is the God of all grace; and that his blessed majesty saves, fully saves, poor, vile, polluted, sin-burdened, sin-sick souls, to the praise and glory of his grace; it is to the glory of grace that all the blessings of God's everlasting love are free, the blessed gift of Christ, in all he is and all he has, and all he has done, and all he is still doing as the glorious head of the church; and all of free grace, and redound to the praise of the glory of his grace. It is therefore to the praise of the glory of God's grace, that he gives life to such poor deathly sinners as we are, yea, eternal life, and this life is in his son even in Jesus Christ, our Lord; so that though our deathliness and the things connected with it may and do make our hearts ache, and our breast-bones sore with groaning under its intolerable load and filth, yet our blessed and immortal life is safe, for our adorable redeemer has said, and sometimes has made us sweetly both hear his voice and feel the power of his love, while he has said, because I live ye shall live also. Bless his precious name, he is the glorious resurrection and the life, and to the praise of the glory of his grace, he sometimes comes by the invincible energy of God the Holy Ghost, and gives us a lift, and raises us up above the depths of the horrible pit, sets our feet upon the immortal efficacy of his blood and righteousness and love and truth, and power and grace, as the rock of ages, and here he

puts a new song into our hearts, and sets faith a singing in the glorious heights of Zion, and with solemn pleasure we sing salvation and honour and glory, and might and majesty and dominion and power be unto God and the lamb for ever and ever. And however exalted our views and feelings may be of Christ and of the Father, and of the Holy Ghost, as our gloriously blessed three-one God; it is the praise of the glory of his grace, so that sin is pardoned and the persons of God's family justified by the blood and obedience of Christ, and all to the praise of the glory of his grace; he is strength to the weak, and wisdom to fools, health to the sickly, bread to the hungry, water to the thirsty, yea, and to the filthy too. In fact, he is all that we can need to make us holy or happy, to give us a title to glory, and a meetness for it to carry us safely there, and eternally bless us when we are there, and to the praise of the glory of his grace. All the intimations of his love that he gives us as we go on, yea, all his loving reproofs, and all his solemn checks to our pride and wandering affections, are all to the praise of the glory of his grace. Every gracious promise and truth revealed in his word, and every drop of unctious dew that accompanies them to our hearts in times of great need, and every whisper of his love, and every drawing forth of faith to view him, to handle him, to walk in and with him, to talk of and to him, and to cast all our cares upon him, are all to the praise of the glory of his grace. Does he call us his love, his dove, his undefiled, and tell us that we are all fair, and there is no spot in us, when we are almost suffocated with the filth of our old man? Wonderfully amazing. But, then, my dear friends, he does all this to the praise of the glory of his grace. Does he put forth manifestatively his arm of love under us, and communicate divine power unto us, and then sweetly say to our souls, "Come up with me from Lebanon my spouse, with me from Lebanon, look from the top of Amana, from the top of Shenir and Hermon, from the lions' dens, from the mountains of leopards." This does he say to such poor polluted souls as we, "Thou hast ravished my heart my sister; my spouse, thou hast ravished my heart with one chain of thy neck." And does his gloriously blessed majesty enable us to believe all this, and then having shed abroad in our souls his love, and put upon us his beauty, and communicated from himself a holy fragrancy, and caused our hearts to cling, to embrace, and rest upon him, and our lips to kiss him, and then say unto us, "Thy lips, O my spouse, drop as the honeycomb; honey and milk are under thy tongue; and he has shed upon us a heavenly perfume; the smell of thy garments is like the smell of Lebanon." Wonder, and be astonished, my brethren, at such strange language, such unde-

served love, and may the Lord enable both you and me to feel that all this and a thousand times more is all to the praise of the glory of his grace. Talk of riches, honour, pleasure, or dignity, away with all, when compared with Christ and the indescribable fulness of his grace, and the matchless methods he takes to make himself known to such fools, base fools as we are. All other things sink before the glories of the Lamb, into wretched filth and dung. God Almighty keep you, my brethren, with your souls alive in and lively to the glories of the Lamb; and may you live and walk in real vital faith, be much in prayer, and watching thereunto, praying not only for yourselves but each other, that your light may so shine before men, and that you may truly glorify God, giving full proof that you live to the praise of the glory of his grace. Strive together for the faith of the gospel, endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

That the Lord may be with you and bless you, is the prayer of your unworthy pastor,

WM. GADSBY.

HEBREW VI.

We have perused carefully the manuscripts of "S. C. A.," and we believe that, in the meaning which he has laboured to affix to *Heb. 6*, he is in *error*. We do *not* believe, as "S. C. A." does, that the apostle is there describing *real* Christians, but mere nominal Christians; and as well may our correspondent, or any one else, labour to prove that Balaam, king Saul, the old prophet of Bethel, stony-ground, thorny-ground, way-side hearers, or the characters spoken of in *2 Peter*, 2. 22, —as well may it be contended that these were children of God, as to contend that the characters described in *Heb. 6*. 4, 5, and 6, are real children of God. And to say that no *mere professor* can go so far, or have so strong a semblance to the true children as is here, in *Heb. 6*, set forth, is to *deny the express testimony* of scripture. Nor is there, in this description of character, *Heb. 6*, one feature which is not found in the stony-ground hearer.

1st. The stony-ground hearer is enlightened. This we must admit, or else charge the apostle Peter with error, when he informs us of some who had *known* the way of righteousness, and who by the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour escaped for a time the pollutions of the world. Were not these once *enlightened*? and yet, as the apostle Peter in the last verse of that chapter shews, they were not real Christians, but belonged in reality to the worst of characters.

Secondly. These stony-ground hearers *repented of their former courses*, and were purged by reformation (*not* regeneration)

from their old sins. They were thus renewed by a repentance of reformation. This also must be admitted, unless we mean to contend that there is no repentance, except that which is unto life and salvation; if so, then what shall we do with the repentance of the Ninevites, and with the repentance of many others? And is there not a mighty difference between that repentance of reformation which God gives man space to exercise, and that repentance which the Saviour is exalted to bestow? There is between these two kinds of repentance, a vital difference.

Now, when these nominal Christians apostatize, or fall away, it is impossible to renew them again to repentance.

We do not know that it would be right to call these persons *hypocrites*, because, as long as they make a profession, they may be sincere, though their profession has in it no *spiritual* reality; yet it may have in it a natural sincerity; and we are disposed to think that those who profess to be friendly to the truth, and are *sincere*, had better remain in that state, than to apostatize therefrom. If it be not so, we know not why the apostle Peter says it had been *better* for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them.

And *why* would it have been better not to have known the way of righteousness, or, when known, to have kept in the way? Would they, if they had continued in the way, have been saved at last? *Certainly not*; for they are *not* born of God, and therefore cannot *savingly* endure to the end.

We believe that there are degrees in suffering, and that some will receive a greater condemnation than others; and that therefore, if apostates had not known, or, when they had known, to have kept in the way, they would not have wilful acts of apostacy to answer for at the bar of God. We think the general drift of the scriptures bears us out in this conclusion.

Thus we see the natural man may be enlightened, that he may repent and be renewed morally, and yet be but a natural man still. There is in this description of character, *Heb. 6*, not one word concerning *either life or regeneration*. There is indeed the strong *semblance* of these, but *not* their substance or reality. But let us still proceed with our stony-ground hearer, for he is not only enlightened, renewed, and reformed, but also *rejoices* at the name of Jesus Christ, and, like Herod, does many things *gladly*, and, like some of John the Baptist's hearers, *rejoice* in the *light* (*not life*) for a season; and thus does our stony-ground hearer taste the heavenly gift, and is made partaker of some of the property of the Holy Ghost; but of what property? Not pardoning mercy, nor any one of the blessings, essential blessings of the new covenant, but are partakers of the Holy Ghost in the testimony of his word and common gifts, as were

Balaam, king Saul, Judas, and many others. They taste the good word of God, and are governed for a time by the powers (authorities) of the world to come. They feel convinced that the Holy Scriptures are the word of God, they have both a zeal and a reverence for God.

Now, some of these fall away, and some do not. Those of them who do fall away, make dreadful work of it; they generally go to most woeful lengths, and which the apostle gives us to understand, for he says they crucify the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame. None but deadly enemies would crucify him, or either openly or secretly put him to shame, that is, set him up as an object of contempt and ridicule. Now, if these natural professors fall away, this is what they are pretty sure to do, and their end is to be burned; but of the people to whom the apostle was writing, he was persuaded better things, things that accompany salvation.

Here then are two classes of persons; the one were believers naturally from the convictions of conscience, the others were believers by the power of God. The apostle speaks of them as *two distinct classes*. Of the nominal, he speaks in the *third* person, for it is impossible for *those*; but of those of whom he was persuaded *better* things, he speaks in the *second* person; but we are persuaded better things of *you*. The things he says of one class, are very different from those he says of the other. Of one he speaks as being the dry and thirsty land that drinketh in the rain, that cometh *oft* upon it, and bringing forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth *blessing* from God; but the other who fall away, beareth thorns and briars. Again, to set a crown of thorns upon a Saviour's head, that they may again set him at nought; but they are *nigh* unto *cursing*, and their end is to be burned.

Here then, we repeat, are *two* distinct classes of character. How vain then the attempts of *men* to join that together which God hath put asunder.

If the persons spoken of were real children of God, and *could* not in this sense of the word fall away, then would he not have said so? but he does *not* say so. The apostle does not say it is impossible for them to fall away; he says no such thing. What right then has any man to say it is impossible for the persons of whom he is speaking to fall away? The apostle speaks *not* of the impossibility of their falling away, but the reverse, and shews what these persons would proceed to do if they should fall away; he shews that their last state is worse than the first; or, as Peter words it, it would have been better for them not have known the way of righteousness, than to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them; for they become such deadly enemies, that no reproof, no admonition, yea, neither fear nor hope

can move them, but they are given up to a reprobate mind.

We then again repeat it, that the apostle does *not* say it is impossible for such to fall away ; he does not say this ; what he says is, that it is impossible to renew them again to repentance, seeing that both their *character and sins differ* from the character and sins of the Lord's people.

The people of God cannot become *wilful* enemies to Christ ; and though Peter denied that he knew the Lord, yet he could no more consent unto the counsel and deed of them that crucified Jesus, than could the other apostles, or Joseph of Aemathæa, ; but Judas was of a very different character, and therefore fell away, and made dreadful work of it.

And were it not that we well know that to "err is human," we should wonder how any good man should attempt to make this 6th of *Hebrews* describe real possessors instead of mere professors. If there were no such characters as stony-ground hearers, nominal Christians and apostates, if there were no such characters as these, we may then deny that the apostle is here speaking of mere professors.

To us then it is clear, that in order to be a *real* Christian, not only must all that be possessed described in *Heb.* 6. 4, 5,—not only must all this be possessed, but *something more* ; not only must we be enlightened, but must be quickened from the dead, and be made hereby sensible of our state as sinners. There must be a broken and a contrite heart, a looking on him whom we have pierced, and mourning and a being in bitterness for him, a trembling at his word, so as to be made earnest, sincere, and becoming experimentally rooted and grounded in the truth as it is in Jesus. This is *something more* than being merely enlightened ; when people are merely enlightened, there is no *real* heavenly spiritual change nor is there in such, that repentance which brings and truly keeps the soul in the dust of self-abasement before God. The merely enlightened professor is light, frothy, without savour or power, or real conflict, or burden, or any permanent soul trouble ; he has no *root* in himself, and therefore ever in danger of falling away ; and if he *should* fall away, his last state will be worse than the first. It is impossible to renew him again to repentance.

And there must also be something more than tasting ; the heavenly gift must be not merely tasted, but *possessed*. If Christ, be the heavenly gift here meant, then, must he be possessed in the heart, the hope of glory. The merely enlightened are temporally delighted with this heavenly gift, but they do not, in tasting of this heavenly gift, taste that the Lord is *gracious*. Pardoning, justifying, sanctifying, redeeming, delivering, grace, are matters the merely enlightened do not enter into ; they are not *feelingly* convinced of their need of such things.

And if this heavenly gift mean the kingdom of God, the *moral*, but not the *spiritual* peacefulness of which the natural man may enter into,—if this kingdom be the heavenly gift here meant, then the real Christian being born of God sees this kingdom, spiritually enters into its eternal immunities, is at home therein, and there lives in all his hopes and best affections; whereas, the merely enlightened professor simply tastes or recognizes the advantages of its external, but wholesome laws; he tastes the advantages of conformity thereto. How many thousands advocate with zeal sincere the externals of Christianity, and are yet utterly destitute of any acquaintance with the real freedom, glory, and firmness of this kingdom; and therefore no wonder if such should fall away from their slight connection with the kingdom of God, and prefer thereto the kingdom of the world. Demas, said the apostle, hath forsaken me, having *loved* this present world.

But these merely enlightened are made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and so were Balaam and king Saul, and were enlightened; but the real Christian is a partaker of the Holy Ghost, not merely in his *gifts*, but in all his *saving relations*, in which relations the soul is indissolubly united to Christ, and brought into the love of God, and cannot be separated therefrom, cannot fall into final impenitence, nor become impervious to heavenly reproof, nor go from bad to worse, to final destruction; but many of these merely enlightened go back, and walk no more with the truth, but become deadly enemies thereto, and are nigh unto cursing, and their end is to be burned, their portion is to be in that lake which burneth with fire and brimstone. These, though they may have had the Holy Ghost in some of his gifts, never had the holy spirit in his indwelling and saving relations, for where he begins the good *work* he carries it on until the day of Jesus Christ. But these merely enlightened ones taste the good word of God, and so does the stony-grounded hearer taste the good word of God, he anon receives it with joy, but he has no real conviction of his state as a sinner before God, and consequently no experimental understanding of the truth; for if he had, he would not so lightly esteem the truth as to turn away from it and become an enemy to it. No, verily; for if he knew the truth in its vital and final importance, he would not crucify the Son of God afresh, nor put him to an open shame.

The true Christian does not merely taste the good word of God, but understands the truth, loves the truth, abides in the truth, is made free by the truth, the truth is his shield and buckler; truth is the girdle of his loins, a lamp unto his path, a light to his feet, and brings to him all the mercies and blessings of eternal salvation. Thus he does not merely taste the

good word of God, but lives thereon, and walks thereby in that straight path, in that narrow way, into which the stony-ground hearer, the merely enlightened, never entered.

But these merely enlightened are also affected by the powers of the world to come; eternal things are somewhat weighty with them; they are reformed, and have a zeal for God, but having no experimental acquaintance with his mercy and salvation, there is no judgment in their goings; the light that is in them is not the light of *life*, but merely the light of the *letter* of the word, so that other powers have in *reality* a firmer hold of them than those of the powers of the world to come; and hence, if circumstances so combine as to bring the powers of darkness into operation against them, they are not able to stand in the evil day, but give up their profession, go over to the adversary, and hate the truths and people they once professed to love; so that the Lord cannot say unto such, "Because thou hast *kept* the word of my patience, I will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all them that dwell on the earth."

Altogether, then, this portion of scripture in *Heb.* 6, like many other scriptures, is very close and searching; and those who are made honest before God, will desire to be searched, and will seek to be searched. "Search me, O God, and see if there be any wicked way dwelling in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

We do not give any extracts from the manuscripts of "S. C. A.," and for the simple reason that there are in his manuscript no connected remarks bearing with any force upon the subject. "S. C. A." is very liberal in expressions of antipathy to the view we have here taken of this portion of scripture, but "S. C. A." must be told that strong expressions, hard words, daring confidence, and outrageous declamation, are no proof whatever that he is right.

But we cannot close our remarks without noticing one point which with "S. C. A." seems to be a stronghold, such as he seems to think cannot be shaken; it is this,—that the Son of God *cannot be crucified afresh*, that the sins of men cannot crucify him again; "S. C. A." quoting in proof, that the sins of men cannot crucify him again, *Job*, 35. 6, 7, "If thou sinnest, what doest unto him," &c.; and then "S. C. A.," without any difficulty, finds plenty of scriptures to prove that Jesus Christ cannot die again; but here "S. C. A." is fighting as one that beateth the air, for who does contend that Jesus Christ can be *personally* crucified afresh? But because he cannot *personally* die, or be crucified again, does it therefore follow that there is *no sense* in which he can be crucified afresh? is it now where written, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou ME?" Is it nowhere written that, "As much as ye did it unto the least of

these my brethren, ye did it unto *me*?" Does nowhere the Lord say, "He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye?" and is it nowhere recorded that we "are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones?" (*Eph.* 5. 30.) And is it nowhere found in history that apostates have put to death the members of Christ? Has he not then, in this *relative* sense, been crucified twice ten thousand times twice told?

"S. C. A." wishes his reader to think that he ("S. C. A.") has a very *deep* experience; and whatever deep experience "S. C. A." may pretend to, or in reality have, he is certainly wrong in the meaning he has laboured to affix to the scripture he has taken in hand, and laboured (we do not say intentionally) to blunt the sword of the Spirit, to weaken the force of truth, and to obscure that light which shews up the mere professor in distinction from the real possessor, and to remove those lines of demarkation which divide the precious from the vile, and thus leading mere professors to suppose they are real possessors. The just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again; but the merely enlightened, when they fall, fall away into mischief, into deadly enmity against Christ. We therefore conclude that the characters described in *Heb.* 6. 4, 5, are *not* real Christians, but mere nominal professors. Eds.

MR. OSBOURN AND THE *STANDARD*.

It seems certain persons have got up a report that Mr. Osbourn has said from the pulpit, that he would rather preach to *drunkards* than to a *doubting* and *fearing* people.

When this report several months ago, first came to our ears, we personally put the question to Mr. Osbourn, and he denied, in *terms positive*, that he had ever used such an expression; and it really seems to us that Mr. Osbourn, as an honest man and respectful to others, is tempted to think there could not be so much noise concerning this expression if there were not some truth in it; and lest he should in an unguarded moment have used such an expression, he now, after so much positive assertion against him, hesitates to deny it, lest he should add sin to sin. Aged weakness seems unable amidst so many accusers to speak with assurance upon the matter, and the truth thereof is taken for granted, and Mr. Osbourn cast out, as we suppose, both from the *Standard* and its connections; we say *connections*, for Mr. Osbourn was to supply during the month at St. George's Road, Manchester, but in consequence of what is said in the *Standard* he is rejected, and after what manner he is rejected will be shewn in the letters subjoined to these remarks.

But do we hold Mr. Osbourn altogether faultless? Yes, somewhere about as faultless as we do all other mortal men; and we

decidedly disapprove of some of his expressions. He does not seem to us to be so clear in the work of the Holy Spirit as we could wish; we believe his meaning is better than his words; and after all, he treats the subject of doubts and fears in the same way that most of the old divines did, and that some good and useful men now do, therefore he is not alone in this want of clearness. Mr. Osbourn, like many others, does not always *distinguish* between the several kinds of doubts and fears of which the Lord's people are the subjects; there is a wide difference between calling in question the truth of God, and trembling, and doubting, and fearing, lest matters should not be right between God and conscience. When God stirs up jealousy like a man of war, there must be doubting and fearing, and trembling, and heart-searching; nor can there be any release from this state but by the realization of pardoning, delivering, and justifying mercy. For this shall every one that is godly pray in a time when salvation shall be found.

Again: as there is a difference between calling in question the truth, and calling in question personal interest therein, so there is a difference between the *sincere* doubts and fears of *infirmity*, and the *pretended* doubts and fears of *hypocrisy*. Abundance of the latter we evidently have in the present day; indeed, without a good share of hypocrisy in this way, the standing of many could not be maintained. Do you doubt and fear? is with them the important question; do you sometimes curse God in your heart? do you sometimes feel as though you could kill every body and yourself too? O yes, indeed I do, and ten times worse than that; this is the man that will pass for a *deeply* tried Christian, while the whole course of his conversation is either as sullen and waspish as old Nabal, or else as frothy as the troubled sea, or light as chaff; and some ministers of this description will sit and smoke, if not drunk like sots, and slander others or talk of some rubbish or another until just time to go into the pulpit, and then tell the people from the pulpit what a *solemn* day they have had, and what AWFUL conflicts they have had.

But, however, just before they go into the pulpit, the *groaning* time comes on; alas, no text—here is a pretty to do; one would almost think that some of these were a relic of the sect we read of in church history, called *shakers*; for as the time draws near for them to go into the pulpit, their pains increase upon them, and they dance their knees about, that even the St. Vitus's dance could not be much worse; they go into the pulpit and deal out the veriest rant, and then have the effrontery to palm this morbid animality upon the Holy Ghost. Such proceedings as these, and the real heart searching doubts, and fears, and temptations of the people of God, are very different.

And, now, what is the impression which the remarks in the *Standard*, and the result in some quarters—what is the impression upon the minds of many, and what do their observations amount to, but to this—that

The *Standard* can see and pass by the wrongs of its own party; that men of their own party can never do wrong, and that every report against men *not* of their own party is received with avidity, “treasured up whole and undiminished,” are condemned without mercy for things which, in the *Standard*’s own party are winked at or passed over, or even turned into something praiseworthy. And, further, the impression of many is, that if Mr. Osbourn had been a PARTY man and pledged himself to certain technicalities from a certain vocabulary, then his excellencies as a minister would have been woven into a veil large enough to cover his infirmities. Love covereth a multitude of faults, but hatred stirreth up strifes. And out of the many excellencies found in Mr. Osbourn’s ministry, are any of them, by the *Standard*, brought forth or acknowledged?

And, farther, the impression is, that if the Editors of the *Standard* have been disappointed in Mr. Osbourn’s ministry, that it is their own fault for forming of him a premature judgment, and that they ought not to lay that blame upon Mr. Osbourn, which more properly belongs to themselves.

And, farther, people think also that the disapprobation which the Editors of the *Standard* express of Mr. Tryon’s strictures upon Mr. Osbourn, does not arise from any respect to Mr. Osbourn, but merely from a desire to avail themselves of such an opportunity to make a home thrust at Mr. Tryon.

Mr. Tryon, we must say, is very naughty; he ran away from school and opened an academy for himself; he was in the *Standard* school, we are informed, about seven years, where he learnt how to chasten and condemn almost every body *except* himself; shewing himself twofold more zealous at this work than were those who were his teachers. In a word, this disciple has risen above his master; it ought to have been enough to have been *as* his master, but no, he would be above his master; and to shew that he meant to go to work in good earnest, he took the rod and began to lay heavy stripes upon his own master, and has belaboured him most unmercifully, and has at last drawn from him a *serio-sarcastic* confession; but still even this does not satisfy Mr. Tryon; he seems bent upon going the full length of Solomon’s *Prov.* 19. 18, “*Let not thy soul spare for his crying.*” What Mr. Philpot is to do with this over-grown pupil of his, we know not. We think he had better keep out of the way, and let Mr. Tryon “finish his journey alone,” for instead of being a serious reprover, he is a furious persecutor.

But to return. We do not say the impression as above

stated may be, or may not be correct, but there is such an impression; and that it goes farther than we have stated, it is the impression with some that there has been and is a system of bigotry and exclusion followed out by the *Standard* party, that some are asking whether these men are placed as sentinels to keep the word and gospel of God from having free course; whether they are not determined as much as lieth in them to *hinder* the gospel of Christ, to write and preach every man down who does not feel at liberty to sacrifice unto their net and burn incense unto their drag, *Hab.* 1. 16—and he that putteth not into their mouths, they even prepare war against him.

Hence they instance this circumstance. Mr. Osbourn would during the month of December, have preached at St. George's Road, Manchester, to perhaps nine or ten hundred people; but the *Standard* steps in, and by *implication*, says *no*; a church meeting is hastily called, and governed, not by the word of God, but by the *Standard* and by their own blind prejudices, and ten or a dozen of erring mortals practically say to the multitude, "you shall not hear the gospel; you shall perish, and be lost to all eternity, rather than *our* importance shall be affected;" yea, is it not practically saying to Satan, "Go forth, *black* prince, triumphantly; *we* will *make* thy foes obey." What can Satan, what can most malicious friends desire more? The dread of the enemy is, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine upon benighted man. If Cranmer loathed the very sight of that hand which had signed his recantation, and holding it in the flames of martyrdom, exclaiming, "That *unworthy* hand, that *unworthy* hand;" and what good will be derived by those who have held up their puny hands against the gospel of God, in this case aiming both to touch one of the Lord's anointed, and to do one of his prophets harm.

The worst wish for them we have is, that the Lord may not lay this sin to their charge. Most happy should we be that instead of seeing things as they are, to see the gospel flourishing among them.

However, the Lord will have his own, and if his ministers be shut out at one place, the Lord will make way for them in another, while they shall shake off the dust of their feet against those who reject them. The Lord will not always let things go on at this rate, and indeed it is some comfort to see that this party spirit system is beginning to quake, and will by and by be made to hide its hateful head.

We see wherein are Mr. Osbourn's deficiencies and want of clearness, but still they are not such as to warrant the slanders which blind and envious mortals are labouring to heap upon him.

We here subjoin, first, a letter assigning the reasons Mr. Osbourn was not, according to engagement, to preach during the month at St. George's Road, the Chapel of the late Mr. Gadsby, Manchester.

TO MR. OSBOURN.

Manchester, Nov. 15th, 1847.

SIR,—The correspondence between yourself and the Editors of the *Gospel Standard* has attracted the notice of the Members of our Church, and we were obliged to call the Church together on Lord's-day last on the subject; we are under the painful necessity to inform you that the subject was taken into consideration, and the Church decided that, to all appearances, your coming among us in the month of December would cause much unpleasantness, the majority of the Church decided to *negative* your engagement. Under these circumstances, painful as they are, we are obliged to seek another supply for the month of *December*; and, painful as it may be to your feelings, we hope the Lord will overrule it for his declarative glory and your soul's well being.

Yours,

J. GREAVES.

P.S.—Mr. Ashworth thanks you for the few lines you sent him, and hopes you are well; he is doing very well for the time.

The following extract of a letter will shew what sort of a *majority* it was that rejected Mr. Osbourn:—

Nov. 19th, 1847.

The church was called together at St. George's Road after the morning service, and most of the members, as I suppose, being anxious to get home to their dinners, did not stop to the church meeting; out of *two hundred and fifty* members, there were only *twenty* present; *twelve* voted against Mr. Osbourn, and six for him, and two did not vote.

An amendment was proposed, that all which the Editors say be not taken for granted, but that the members hear Mr. Osbourn for themselves, and judge afterwards. The amendment was put and negatived by a majority of *six*.

So then it seems there are some at St. George's Road who do not think it right that the members of their church should either hear or judge for themselves. If this be the state of things fostered by the *Standard*, is it any wonder sober-minded men should make such observations as they do, declaring that even the very colour of the wrapper associated with some of its contents, puts them in mind of the wrapper of a certain old lady, *Rev. 17. 4*. This may perhaps be rather harsh, but we must leave the comfort of ~~hindering~~ the gospel of Christ to those who love to have it so.

Eds.

THE WELL OF BETHLEHEM.

A PILGRIM, to Zion on high,
Thro' fears, snares, and dangers I press;
While Satan and sin me annoy,
And trials and troubles distress.
In deserts, when lonely I sigh,

No spring there my thirst to allay,
 "Who will give me to drink," is my cry,
 Of the well by fair Bethlehem's way?"

The Saviour its waters did bless,
 When to Bethlehem a stranger He came ;
 To cleanse from all sin, they possess
 A virtue none other can claim :
 Kings and prophets have prized it alone ;
 The saints of its excellence tell ;
 And sinners, its power that have known,
 Praise the water of Bethlehem's well.

For Thy presence, O God ! my soul pants ;
 Jerusalem when shall I see ?
 When shall I be glad with Thy saints,
 From the bond of corruption be free ?
 Beset here by foes, when I think
 The Canaanites' rage to repel,
 I faint, and cry, "Oh, for a drink
 Of the water of Bethlehem's well!"

When I droop, thro' temptation's fierce heat,
 Or dwell in the sun's scorching beams,
 How I long for a shady retreat,
 By the "place of broad rivers and streams!"
 While the world its vain pleasure doth prize,
 Of their wealth when its votaries tell,
 My spirit in secret, oft sighs
 For the water of Bethlehem's well.

With some weighty cross when I bend,
 Or of langour and leanness complain ;
 When I weep o'er the loss of some friend,
 Whom on earth I shall ne'er meet again ;
 Or, in Satan's dark hour when I sink,
 And no promise the gloom doth dispel,
 Blest Spirit ! oh, give me to drink
 Of the water of Bethlehem's well !

Refreshings of grace, Lord ! impart ;
 In each trying case, let me sing,
 "Spring up, oh, sweet well ! in my heart,
 To life everlasting there spring."
 From the cold hand of death when I shrink,
 And bid this frail body farewell,
 Dear Saviour ! then give me to drink
 Of the water of Bethlehem's well.

Manchester,

A PILGRIM.

THE GOSPEL AMBASSADOR;

OR,

Christian Pilgrim's Friend.

"Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."—*Matt. v. 3.*

"The election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded."—*Rom. xi. 7.*

EDITORS' ADDRESS.

WE again venture to address a few words to our readers upon matters not so much pertaining to our editorial labours as to the essentials of vital godliness; for our poor labours may be of little or of no account, but still we mean well, and believe that pieces by our correspondents have been owned of the Lord and blessed to some; so that the Gospel Ambassador has had a work to do, and, as it seems to be the will of the Lord it should be continued, we hope there is yet something more for it to do; and, as it will be now brought in great part under the management of other Editors, there is encouragement to believe that it will not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord.

In the present state of things we have delusions round about us, and which delusions are progressing at a most fearful rate: and how weak is the stand which the church makes against these mighty torrents! Surely the enemy has but little to do but sit upon the seven mountains, Rev. xvii. 9, and see his work going satisfactorily on, while true ministers of the gospel are scattered one from the other. The strength of these bearers of burdens is but little, and there is much rubbish, so that they are not able to build the wall, Neh. iv. 10. Nor are verbal or written agreements, or associations, or any relation whatever formed by man, of any use in this matter. All such proceedings tend more to make formalists and hypocrites than to make real Christians, and to feed pride and increase carnality rather than lessen the same. In all such associations the shrewd, the intellectual, and the crafty reign in all the delight of self-importance; while the feeble-minded are turned into blind and humble servants: all of which is utterly opposed to the rights and liberties of each believer in the Lord Jesus.

GOSPEL AMBASSADOR.] B

[JANUARY, 1848.

We know of but one remedy for these evils which now make such havoc among the people of God, and it is a remedy which must commence and reign in the heart of every real Christian : and that remedy is, the *power of godliness*. The present state originates in *carnality*.

This then is the position into which we are brought upon this matter : we are brought to feel that there is no coming away from earthly to heavenly things only as God the Father draweth us ; that we can do nothing without Him who is the hope of Israel ; that it is the spirit that quickeneth, for the flesh profiteth nothing ; that we can receive nothing except it be given from above : thus we can distinguish between the fountain of life being with the Lord, and its being with us ; also between mercy and plenteous redemption being with him, and the manifestation thereof unto us.

It is, indeed, truly encouraging to us, even in our worst and lowest states, that with the Lord there is the fountain of life, mercy, and plenteous redemption ; and that for those who partake of divine life there are mercy and redemption to forgive and deliver, there are also with him durable riches and righteousness ; and that he will cause those who love him to inherit substance, and he will fill their treasures.

Thus, on the one hand, there are all the blessings which can be needed to bring out of all tribulation ; and, on the other hand, riches and righteousness to supply, establish, and make for ever perfectly happy all who shall be saved.

This, we say, is a matter that belongs personally to every real Christian. Nothing but such a sight and sense of what they are, so to bring them into the dust before God ; nothing but an increase of his fear before their eyes, more of his love in their hearts, so as to enable them to rise high enough to *delight* in the works, and wonders, and ways of the Lord, real poverty of spirit felt, real love to Him who giveth them all things richly to enjoy. What one promise is there throughout the Bible, which does not belong to those who receive the truth in the *practical* love thereof ? Shall not those who love him be as the sun, when he goeth forth in his might ? Is there not a kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him ? Hath eye seen, or ear heard, or hath it entered into the heart of (the carnal) man to conceive the things which God hath prepared for them that love him ? And is not every one of his new covenant eternal transactions indescribably endearing to the soul that is ready to perish ? How amazingly does electing, redeeming, and saving grace come down to the uttermost of all our wants and woes, abolish and swallow up the whole, and thus bring the poor and needy on to ground that is firm, into circumstances good, and acceptance with God equitable and honourable !

In the flesh we have nothing but destitution, ruin, guilt, and misery, and wretchedness; it is in the Lord that we have righteousness and strength. How clear, then, is it that every good and perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning!

Here, then, is our necessity—here is also the only source of supply. The next thing is the *obtaining* of this supply. The Lord, for wise purposes, has made this the most *difficult* part with us of this vital matter. The people of God feel that their weakness and worthlessness are alway with them; but the *supply* they have *not* alway with them. *The Lord's order of things is, to be enquired of for these things.* While we know right well that there is much in feeling—in our besetments—in the rising evils of the heart—in temptation—in the long absence of the Lord—in the deadness and darkness prevailing in the mind, and in perplexities of various kinds, we know right well that there is much in these things to *discourage* in seeking after heavenly things; and herein lies the *evidential* reality of the faith and patience of the saints. They must be thus put to the test: for he who has not love enough to *winter* with the truth, so as to take root downwards, will not be privileged to summer with the truth, or bear fruit upwards. He that *endureth*—however small his enjoyment of the truth—he that *endureth* in the *love* of the truth unto the end, the same shall be saved.

But, notwithstanding discouragement, there is infinitely more encouragement than there possibly can be discouragement. The word of the gospel comes with this question, "*Is anything too hard for the Lord?*" Is there any foe that he cannot and will not defeat—any evil from which he cannot deliver—any case which he cannot manage? And what can be more inviting than the encouragement given throughout the word of God, to seek him by prayer and supplication, and by all the means he has graciously given? We have in the word examples wonderful of prevalency with God by prayer; but it must be the prayer of *faith*, which *worketh* by *love*; for, to pray to God, in whose truth we do not believe, would be, in effect, asking the Lord to set aside his own counsels, to give up the order of his own kingdom, and overturn the welfare of his own people: hence, the Lord leads his people to seek him after the due order. He brings them into depths of trouble, out of which they cry to him. He wounds and humbles, and that in many ways; some in one way, and some in another. Some are suffered to stumble; yea, it is written that some of them of understanding shall fall, to try them, to purify and to make them white. They shall thus come into brokenness of spirit, and be made earnest with God in working out their own salvation with fear and

trembling. Of such an one it can be said, *Behold, he prayeth*. Others are tried by providence. They have much to endure in this respect, and weaknesses and evils within, before unknown, are brought to light, and the fulness and power of the gospel become more earnestly sought. Earthly charms are utterly spoiled; gourds are blasted; the pathway made crooked, rough, and thorny; their temporal meat obtained, as it were, from ravens; the present brook dries up; they are driven to some other place. The Lord will go before them, but they wander in a solitary way, finding no city to dwell in long together; and the Spirit witnesseth that in every city bonds and afflictions abide them; and all this is to show them what is in their hearts, to humble and to prove them.

Others, again, are much tossed about by the waves of temptation. They are beset with great fury; the enemy comes in like a flood upon them; they sink as between the waves, and are enclosed on every side; they reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wits' end,—and shall thus be threatened apparently with destruction, until they cry unto the Lord, who alone can command the calm they desire.

Others, who may not partake largely of the foregoing trials, have, nevertheless, a thorn in the flesh somewhere, just tormenting and grievous enough to spoil their mere creature resting-places, and to make them feel that they are still in the wilderness, and that their hope must be in the promise of that rest that remaineth to the people of God; and then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Ezek. xxviii. 24, "And there shall be no more a pricking brier unto the house of Israel, nor any *grieving* thorn of all that are round about them, that despised them; and they shall know that I am the Lord God."

Others, again, are tried with much bodily affliction. What an empty, dreary scene the world appears unto such! and when the dew of heaven is resting upon them, when they have a little refreshing from the Lord's presence, when divinely alive unto Him who died for them, and rose again, how willingly would they depart to be with Christ, which is indeed far better! But when the Lord hides his face, how trying then is the complicated burden of outward trouble! Bodily affliction, fiery darts from the enemy, and a whole body of sin and death within, what wonder that, under the pressure of such adversity, such should curse the day of their birth, or wish their lives had *not* been spared to drink of a cup so bitter; or thus to be like a sparrow, alone upon the house-top; or like a pelican of the wilderness, or an owl of the desert? yet the *end* will show the Lord to be very pitiful, and of tender mercy.

Others are tried by persecution: so placed by providence as

to have much to endure from the *coarse* insults of the profane, or from the *refined* sneers of the formalist; those whited walls, those garnished sepulchres, those blind but deadly enemies to the liberty which the believer has in Christ. But blessed is the man that for truth and righteousness' sake endureth such persecution; for when his trial is over, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.

Others, and that very many, are much tried relative to the reality of their interest in eternal salvation. They see that thousands upon thousands are upon this matter *deceiving* themselves; calling themselves Christians, while, at the same time, they are utterly destitute of the life, and spirit, and truth of God in their souls. But with those who are truly of God interest in Christ must, in order to satisfy them, become a matter not merely of *opinion*, but of *demonstration*. That demonstration must not be a logical, a mathematical, or any other humanly devised evidence; but it must be by the word of truth coming to the conscience, to the heart, to the understanding, not in word only, but in power, in much assurance, and joy of the Holy Ghost. He who is *content* with anything short of this shows himself a stranger to the power of godliness.

But while the people of God are all, more or less, a tried people, we think there is, at the present time, a great deal of carnal ease in Zion, a spirit of most deplorable conformity to the world, and especially to a time-serving professing world. Professors who can so shape their course as to hear almost anything, and call it gospel. Professors by shoals; who to-day are crying, All hail, and to-morrow, Crucify him, away with him. Others are the fairest friends before your face, but behind your back are your deadliest foes. The Saviour's fan is in his hand; and were he now to arise, and use it, we believe the number that would prove to be nothing but chaff would be *frightful*. The cleansing time must come; and terrible will be the work when, though the wheat shall be gathered into the garner, yet will he burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.

Nothing, as it appears to us, but an increase of the spirit of grace and supplication in the heart of each Christian, to bring him into closer connexion with the throne of grace, can be the right remedy. A sort of a spirit of palsy is upon us, and this kind goeth not out but by spiritual fasting and prayer; and we trust there is yet hope in Israel concerning this thing.

This is a matter in which gospel ministers especially are interested; it is a matter that must be felt by them. The great thing with them is, *first to gain possession from heaven* of the things they desire to minister to others; for how can they minister to others what they themselves do not possess? how can they, out of the *good treasure* of their hearts, bring forth

good things, if the good treasure be *not* there? and how can they bring forth things new and old, if they have no practical connexion with the heavenly treasury? It is very easy for ministers to go into the pulpit, and tell us how spiritual we ought to be, and to deal out to us with unsparing hand the exhortations of the letter of the word, and to storm at us, and all but cut us off for not hearing better, and praying better, and singing better, and believing better, and rejoicing better, and walking better, and altogether getting on better: this is all very easy to the minister to *talk* about, but not quite so easy to put into practice. The minister who goes to work in this way altogether misunderstands his business. He knows not the way of the heavenly vineyards; he knoweth not either how to go to the city of the Lord himself, nor to lead his hearers there either; nay, he rather drives them away, for when they ask for bread he gives them a stone, if they ask for fish he will give them a serpent, and if they ask for an egg he will give them a scorpion; and it is not likely the children will thrive much upon such fare as this. To preach the *letter* of the word, in a way *contrary* to the spirit of the word, is to turn the truth of God into a lie, and set the form above the power, and to put the shadow in the place of the reality. This line of things would withhold from David, in his *necessity*, the shewbread; it would deprive the disciples of Christ of a few ears of corn, because it is the sabbath day; and would drive them out of the cornfields, and send the priests out of the temple; and make not Jesus of Nazareth Lord of the sabbath day, but would make the sabbath day to be lord of all, and thus worship the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for evermore.

The reason that many who are called ministers of Jesus Christ—the reason they do not preach the life and love of the truth, is, because they do not possess the same: they preach what they possess, and this is all they can do.

The great point in the public ministration of the word is for the minister, as we hinted above, to have in heart and soul possession the *things*, not the mere words, but the things of the Spirit of God; and instrumentally minister life and light, pardon and faith, and love, and humility, and godly fear, and strength, and righteousness, and peace, and holiness, and knowledge, and understanding, confirmation, establishment, and rest, and thus helping them much which have believed through grace. Herein lies both the difficulty and dignity of the ministry; the success lies in the Lord confirming the word with signs and evidences following. The wisdom of words and excellency of speech in these matters go for nothing. We leave the harp and the organ to those who are content with things without life, giving sound.

Great grace, great wisdom from above, great trials, and great power with God, are among the essentials to ministerial usefulness.

As far then as ministers are concerned, it must be the actual ministration of the grace of God, so as to help the people to an increased possession thereof, as well as the conversion of sinners, which makes full proof of the ministry, and shows the minister to be a workman that needeth not to be ashamed.

Our readers may thus pretty clearly see the end we have in view in continuing the Gospel Ambassador.

FIRST CHAPTER OF GENESIS.

SALVATION is as much of God as was the creation; the latter is made to illustrate the former. Did God, in the beginning, create the heavens and the earth, and all therein? so he creates the new heavens and the new earth, and creates his people in Christ Jesus. Was the earth without form, and void, and darkness upon the face of the deep? such is the state a sinner, when God takes him in hand, finds himself in. Did the Spirit of God move upon the face of the waters, and give vitality or capacity to the earth to bring forth seed to the sower, and bread to the eater? so the Holy Spirit of God gives capacity to the church to bring forth fruit unto God. Did the Lord say, Let there be light, and there was light? so he shines by his truth into the hearts of his people, to give them the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Did the Lord divide the light from the darkness? so he divides regeneracy from unregeneracy, believers from unbelievers, the sheep from the goats, the children of the day from the children of the night. Did he make a firmament, to divide the waters from the waters? and if this firmament or expanse mean the circumambient air, by means of which the refreshing shower comes seasonably and suitably down upon the earth; so the Lord spiritually sends a plentiful rain, whereby he confirms his inheritance when it is weary.

Did he gather the waters together into one place, and make the dry land appear? so he hath gathered all the troubles of his people together, and made the land of promise to appear. He gathered these waters together in purpose, and makes the heavenly land appear according to his eternal purpose: and this same heavenly land appears again by the mediation of Christ; and again by regeneration, and mercy's manifestation; and again, when absent from the body and present with the Lord; and again, at the last day, and for ever.

Did the Lord say, Let there be lights, &c.? so his glories shine, with "uncreated rays," by Him who is the dayspring from on high, the bright and morning star, the sun of righteousness: and these are to govern night and day, and to be for signs of Jehovah's power, for seasons, and for days, and for years; so the times and seasons belonging to the saints are in the Lord's hands.

Did these morning stars sing together? did these offsprings of creative power, these shining sons of God, shout as it were for joy? Job xxxviii. 7. How much more shall the *redeemed* sons of God sing together! how much brighter shall these immortal stars shine! and in what loftier strains shall they, at the morning of the resurrection, shout for joy, and far exceed "the music of the spheres!"

This earthly creation was peopled with earthly beings; but the new creation with *better* inhabitants than these, with saints and angels, sons and heirs of God.

And God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good; but not so good as the *new* heavens and the new earth.

Some well-meaning people are alarmed at the confusion and discord that the science of geology brings into this chapter; that science informing us that the earth existed thousands of years before Adam was created. Now suppose this could be proved, it would not overturn the fact, that in the beginning GOD CREATED the heavens and the earth, let that beginning have been when it may.

And as for the six days meaning six long successive periods, is a proposition so far-fetched, that it is hardly worthy of notice. All after references in the Scriptures to the creation show the days to have been six literal days.

It is impossible that the works and word of God should contradict each other. The science of geology is yet in its infancy; and as there is, amidst all the propositions at present made to reconcile geology with the first chapter of Genesis, not one satisfactory, we must wait until, like astronomy, it settles down in perfect unison with the word of God.

Our present system of astronomy was once looked upon as a system of infidelity; but it is now known that the Bible does not speak in the niceties and exactitudes of human science, seeing it has ends not merely of temporal, but of *eternal* moment in view; it therefore speaks in language popular and common:—the sun ariseth, and the sun goeth down—that is, it does so in *appearance*. So that, though we know it to be stationary, or nearly so, we still use the same common language, and thereby avoid the clumsy, round-about reference to the diurnal and annual motions of the earth. I therefore need not

to trouble the reader with more words upon inferior things, seeing my object is that which is better than the wisdom of men, or that which is perishable.

ONESIMUS.

(*To be continued.*)

HEBREWS VI. 1—7.

“Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection.”

Therefore—this word, therefore, at the introduction of the chapter, requires a little attention paid to it; for it doubtless has something to do with the meaning of the above scriptures. Therefore—that is, for this or that reason, or in consequence of something done or said. Here we find the word used in consequence of something said in the preceding chapter, which I apprehend will throw a light upon the apostle’s object for leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, to go on unto perfection.

If you turn to the 11th verse of the 5th chapter, you will find the apostle says “that he has of Christ many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing. For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat,” &c. Now let the therefore come in.

Therefore, seeing ye are so dull of hearing; seeing that when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye need to be taught; not merely taught what are the effects of the first principles of the oracles of God, but to be taught which be the first principles of the oracles of God;—therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection.

As the word perfection, here used, has no doubt especial reference to the first principles of the oracles of God, which the apostle alludes to, and will come in in due course, I will, after just taking a little notice of the word “leaving,” proceed with a something that the apostle wishes to avoid. Now by the word “leaving,” here, I do not understand that the apostle intended to give up the principles, or any part of the doctrine of Christ, but merely that for the present, while speaking of something else, he would leave or not speak of them at that time.

But while he would do so, and go on unto perfection, yet before he would speak of that perfection there is something he wishes to avoid doing. What is it?

Well, he wishes to avoid “laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God; of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resur-

rection of the dead, and of eternal judgment." Why so particularly wish to avoid the doing that?

Herein, I believe, lies a great part of the secret of these scriptures. In the present day we have a great many who talk a deal about perfection, and I doubt not but there were in Paul's day too; and he, having spoken of going on unto perfection, therefore by way of clearing their minds, as it were, from any thoughts that they might have that he would go into their way of teaching perfection, with the awful errors advanced in connexion therewith by the preachers of that fleshly perfection, and their awful consequences, says, "not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works," &c. And what were these errors?

Well, what I am going to say is not stated in the text, but to me, by the peculiar wording* of the text, it appears, it may be suggested, it is this,—there are those who say a person may be an object of divine love to-day, but before to-morrow he may do a something that will make him an object of God's wrath; may be possessed of grace to-day, but before to-morrow may dispossess himself of that grace; may be a child of God to-day, and to-morrow a child of hell: and these same folks talk much about perfection in the flesh.

Now if such things were the case with the Lord's dear children it would prove the love of God not to be eternal, the work of the Holy Ghost upon a sinner's soul to be ineffectual, and the work of Jesus Christ to be insufficient: therefore making such assertions as the foregoing is by so many words laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith towards God, &c.; it is invalidating the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ; it is implying the work of Christ is incomplete; nay, more, they go farther, they assert it! they say his redemption is not sufficient for us, unless we add our works of self-righteousness to it. Awful work! but so they are bold to affirm. This is laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works; not the repentance that needeth to be repented of—for such a repentance as that would be a dead work. Well, we have taken a little notice of what it is to lay again the foundation of repentance (not the foundation for repentance) from dead works, &c.; and that the apostle wished to avoid such errors, which also does every man taught of God.

Now let us see if we can get at what is meant by the foundation of these graces of the Holy Spirit. The dear Lord said, "It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you," &c. "Howbeit, when he, the Spirit of

* 6th verse, "If they shall fall away."

truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth," &c. "He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and show it unto you," John xvi. 7—15.

Take particular notice here that it was expedient for his disciples that he (Jesus) went away, or the Comforter would not come. How then did he go away? I answer, by his sufferings, death, and resurrection. And the apostle Peter saith of his resurrection, "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel," Acts v. 31: so we see if he had not thus have risen from the dead, the Holy Spirit would not then have come, and convinced of sin, working repentance in poor sinners' hearts. Thus we perceive his resurrection to be the *foundation* of repentance from dead works.

And of faith toward God. Of faith, it is said, "If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain," 1 Cor. xv. 14. And faith is not only said to be the gift of God, but is also of the operation of God. The resurrection of Jesus Christ is, therefore, the foundation of faith toward God.

Now of the doctrine of baptisms. We find it said of the eunuch, "See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him," Acts viii. 37, 38. As by this it is shown that none but believers are proper subjects for immersion, and as the resurrection of Jesus Christ is the foundation of our faith, so we may conclude his resurrection to be the foundation of baptism by immersion.

But as the word is used in the plural (viz. baptisms) we must also embrace the baptism of the Holy Ghost. It is said of John, that he truly baptized with water; "but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence," Acts i. 5. We have before seen that if Jesus went not away the Comforter would not come, and that it was by his resurrection he went away, after which the Comforter came,—which also proves the resurrection of Jesus Christ to be the foundation of the baptism of the Holy Ghost.

So also with the laying on of hands, and the resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.

Now as the resurrection of Jesus Christ appears to be the foundation of these things, we need not wonder at the apostle wishing to avoid laying again the foundation thereof, or saying anything that would appear in the least to invalidate the resurrection of our blessed Lord.

"And this will we do, if God permit."

That is, we will not only go on unto perfection, but also not to lay again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, &c., if God would permit.

"For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame."

For,—this word "for," here, is a conjunction, and couples with his desire for not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, &c. His reason for such a desire, which would be the consequent effects of such a sentiment, if true, that it is impossible for them to be renewed again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.

I do not see that, as the apostle speaks here in the third person, "those," they must therefore necessarily be nominal Christians, and that with the graces here spoken of there is no life; neither do I see that he must of necessity, in order to convey a right idea, have said in so many words that they were the children of God. To me, the force and power of his argument puts it beyond all doubt; and while I will admit that he does not in so many words say it is impossible for them to fall away, yet I cannot admit that he says they may or do fall away, but only shows the awful consequences of such a circumstance if such were the case.

But I proceed with the apostle's reason for his abstaining from a doctrine that would lay again the foundation of repentance from dead works, by saying a man may be a child of God to-day, and a child of hell to-morrow.

For it is impossible, &c., if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.

Now if God the Father had not eternally loved and chosen a people in Christ, and blessed them with all spiritual blessings in Christ, according as he had chosen them in him before the foundation of the world, then would not Jesus Christ have covenanted with the Father and the Holy Ghost to take upon him the seed of Abraham; then would he not have said, "Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God," Heb. x. 7. He is said to be the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. So, virtually, the sins of his people began to pierce him from the first sin of Adam; and but for the sins of his people he never would have bled on Calvary's tree; nay, all the sins of the whole world put together,

with the most awful sufferings they entail, would never have brought him on this earth in human flesh, if the Father had loved none, and given none into his hands to redeem.

So, then, if you want to know what really brought him down, and crucified him, it was the sins of his people. And he having died once for sin, "and being raised from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord," Rom. vi. 9—11.

Therefore, if any shall fall away for whom he died, and who have been once by the Holy Ghost brought to repentance from dead works to have faith in God, scripturally to receive the ordinance of baptism, having had their minds spiritually enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, namely, that the Lord is gracious, and were made partakers (not merely of the testimony of, but) of the Holy Ghost, in his renewings, and have tasted the good word of God, ("As thy words were found, and I did eat them: and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart," Jer. xv. 16,) and of the sin-subduing and soul-comforting effects of the powers of the world to come—in the pardon of sin, saying, Thy sins, which are many, are forgiven—in speaking peace to the soul, saying, Peace, "peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you," John xiv. 27; not as the world, no! no! it is one of the powers of the world to come,—if any of these that have thus been renewed should fall away, it is impossible they can be renewed again to repentance; for such a circumstance would prove the work of Christ insufficient—the teaching of the Holy Ghost ineffectual; in a word, their sins would again be laid to the Saviour's charge—it would be crucifying to themselves the Son of God afresh; that is, if I understand right, their sins, for which he once atoned and satisfied justice, would afresh begin to pierce, as it were, his hands, his feet, and his side. *But he dieth no more; there is no more sacrifice for sin;* therefore they cannot be renewed to repentance; he would be, therefore, in such a case, put to an open shame. Might not then Satan triumph, that he had not really finished his work? "He said, It is finished, and bowed his head, and gave up the ghost;" but, if the law holds fast some, and justice still has its demands against some for whom he died, again I say, such a case would indeed prove he had not effectually finished his work, and would put him to an open (that is, to a plain, apparent, and evident) shame, for such the word open means. Not all that men, devils, or the lost in hell can say against him would so put him to shame as would this; for, blessed be God!

all they do say against him are lies, and does not really, therefore, put him to open shame; and, blessed be God! we have not so learned Christ, nor had the apostle, for it was his particular aim to steer clear of a sentiment so direful, and so dishonouring to God the Father in his provision of salvation, as to say it did not answer its purpose; and to the Son, by saying his work was insufficient; and the Holy Ghost, by saying the testimony he has borne, viz., that he hath perfected for ever by his one offering all them that are sanctified, is a false testimony. Indeed, the nature of his spiritual education was such as rendered it impossible for him to say such things. Nay, he saith quite the reverse, and brings a positive proof.

For (saith he) the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing of God—it is not left to such an awful catastrophe as to fall from grace, nay! nay!—it receiveth blessing from God.

But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned. Now, mark! that which beareth thorns and briers, not those who have been enlightened, and tasted the heavenly gift, and been made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted of the good word of God, and of the powers of the world to come. No! but that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing, whose end is to be burned.

But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak. Though I have said ye are dull of hearing, need to be taught again which be the first principles of the oracles of God, and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat, and though I have described the consequences of a person falling from grace, if such were possible, which would be most awful, and the state of those whose end is to be burned,—yet we are persuaded better things of you than that you can fall from grace, being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. But to return to the apostle's object of pursuit—perfection.

Therefore, leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection,—perfection; or, in other words, now let us teach you, seeing you need to be taught again, which be the first principles of the oracles of God.

Well, the apostle proceeds with his subject, "When God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself, saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee," &c., &c. But read on to the end of the book, and you will find it to be,

perhaps, one of the most clear and plain statements of the eternal covenant between the sacred Three in one God, on behalf of the church, and of Jesus Christ having accomplished their redemption, making them perfect by his one offering in himself, that we have through the whole Bible, really teaching them which be the first principles of the oracles of God, and, as proposed by him, leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, that is, leaving the principles or effects which that doctrine produces upon our souls, till you come to near the close of the 10th chapter.

Then, in the 11th chapter he gives most striking examples of the effects of one of the principles of the doctrine of Christ, viz. faith, and steers most clear of anything that has the least appearance of a child of God falling from grace, or of invalidating the work of our dear Immanuel in the least sense whatever, his whole argument being a powerful contrast to such views. But a word or two more to show he is in pursuit of perfection.

After speaking of Jesus being made a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec, and so on, he says, "If, therefore, *perfection* were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law,) what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron?" &c. "For the law made nothing *perfect*, but the bringing in of a better hope *did*; by the which we draw nigh unto God. Wherefore he is able to save them to the uttermost" (as though he brings this in on purpose to meet the argument of those who say a child of God may fall from grace, he is able to save them to the uttermost—rendered in the margin, evermore) "that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them," &c., "and needeth not daily, as those high priests," (and as would be the case in order to save any, if the doctrine of falling from grace were true,) "to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself." "For by one offering he hath *perfected for ever* them that are sanctified, whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us." Amen.

THOMAS.

REMARKS ON THE PRECEDING.

As far as our limits will allow, we wish correspondents to have full scope for what they have to say. But it appears to us, that our correspondent, "Thomas," is entirely wrong in his opinion of the characters described in Hebrews vi.: wrong in the beginning, wrong in the process, and wrong in conclusion.

In the first place, "Thomas" places the *adverb* "Therefore"

in the wrong relation. This word "therefore" belongs more properly to the closing verse of the preceding chapter: the same verse commencing with the *disjunctive* conjunction "but," thus disjoining the verse from the preceding verses:—"But" strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, &c.; "therefore," let us now bring a little of this solid food before you; *but*, before we do so, let us, as it were, dismiss *two distinct* matters: first, we will dismiss the elementary, the first principles; and, second, just remind of the enlightened professor, and his fatal falling away, (if he should fall away). The apostle, after dismissing these two distinct matters, goes on (as "Thomas" rightly observes) setting before the people the eternal perfection, security, and glory, they have by Christ Jesus, and that after the order of the new covenant. And if the apostle be not referring to two *opposite* classes of character, why does he illustrate his point by the opposite state of *two* pieces of ground; the one bearing good fruit, the other thorns and briers? What occasion, if he be not speaking of two opposite classes of character, whatever necessity was there, that he should, in order to make his *meaning clear*, set before the people two opposite pieces of ground, the one cursed, the other blest?

We therefore, notwithstanding all that has been said, or, we believe, that can be said, upon this scripture, we still believe that only nominal professors are meant as enlightened, &c. We refer the reader to our last number for our elucidation of this point.

Nor is the apostle (as "Thomas" would have us believe) here arguing against the notion of a real Christian fatally apostatizing; but, first, is pointing out how far a mere professor may go; and then, secondly, the hardened and reprobate state into which they go when they apostatize—they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame; and then, thirdly, the apostle illustrates his meaning, by likening real Christians to good ground, bringing forth good things, and receiving blessing from God; and then, by way of contrast, he likens apostates unto ground bearing thorns and briers, and which is *nigh* unto cursing, whose end is to be burned; but of these believers, upon the whole, he was persuaded better things, and things that accompany—not apostacy, but—salvation.

And on what ground was he persuaded better things of these Hebrew Christians? Was it on the ground stated by our correspondent, "Thomas," that true believers cannot fatally fall away? No, certainly not; he had settled this matter in a previous part of the Epistle, (see chapter ii., from verse 11 to the end). This is not his point here; he is not here settling the question, whether or not a real Christian may be lost, and

so put the Son of God to shame, because he had undertaken to save, and was not able to save. This would rather be making the Son of God *put himself to shame*, by beginning to build, but was not able to finish—by beginning to make war, but not able to “accomplish the warfare.”

The apostle does not say, that the *circumstance* of their falling away crucifies the Son of God afresh, or puts him to an open shame. He does not say this : what he says is, that they, these apostates, crucify the Son of God, &c. ; that they do it, that it is an act of *their own* ; and that this relative crucifixion of Christ is as much a wilful act of deadly enmity as was the literal crucifixion of Christ.

The reason, then, that the apostle was persuaded better things of these Hebrews was, that they were *real* Christians, and not merely enlightened professors, ever liable to direful apostacy, to become thorny ground.

Our correspondent thinks the stony ground hearer did not *repent*. The chief meaning of the original word translated repentance is that of *change*. Now the stony ground hearer certainly does undergo a *change*, and so far may be said to repent. For, remember, the stony ground hearer *dureth* for a while, but when scorching trouble or temptation cometh, he fadeth and falleth away.

But, as our correspondent is wrong in the beginning, and in the process, so he is wrong in his conclusion ; that is, in his conclusion upon his supposed meaning of the scripture now under notice.

Our correspondent says, “*Not those who are enlightened, &c., are nigh unto cursing, whose end is to be burned ; but that which beareth thorns and briers.*”

Very true, “Thomas,” if they remain *conscientious* to the light they have, they will neither be cursed nor burned *as apostates*. But *if* they turn away from the holy commandment delivered unto them, and crucify the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame, they will then come under the worst threatenings of the word of God, and will to their cost find it would have been better not to have known the way of righteousness than thus to have turned from it.

Again ; our correspondent speaks as though no such circumstance as crucifying the Son of God afresh ever occurred ; but the apostle is of a *different* mind. For he does not say, if those of whom he was persuaded better things should fall away, they *would* crucify, &c. ; he uses not this form of speech ; he speaks of the circumstance as *actually occurring*. And “Thomas” will agree with us, that no *real* Christian could do what the apostle describes. Yet the language of the apostle shews it is done, and that by the *apostatizing enlightened* pro-

fessor: for, after describing these professors, he says, "*they, if they.*" Now, who are the nominative to this pronoun "*they,*" but "*enlightened professors*" he previously describes? There is no other nominative to which this pronoun can relate. Now, then, follow up the language of the apostle:—*they, "seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame."*

Seeing *they*—that is, seeing *they do* do it, that is, that it is actually done by such apostates.

The more our attention is led to this scripture the more we see the worse than uselessness of every attempt to soften and melt away its true meaning.

It is a most solemn scripture, and contains four successive parts:—first, here is a description of how far the merely enlightened man may go. Secondly, here is the deadly enmity into which he plunges when he apostatizes; he crucifies the Son of God, &c. Thirdly, here is the seal of his downfall; it is impossible to renew him again to repentance. Could Judas be renewed again to repentance? Fourthly, here is the dreadful end of the apostate; he is nigh unto cursing, his end is to be (as an apostate) burned.

Thus the apostle in this chapter gives us, as it were, parenthetically, this description of the merely enlightened professor, together with his liability to apostacy, and the awfulness thereof; and then proceeds to set before the people of whom he was persuaded better things that perfection which he had proposed to them.

The description, Heb. vi., of a mere professor, is certainly very close, and is descriptive of that which every real Christian possesses; and perhaps of all the descriptions given in the Bible of mere professors, there is none containing more *semblance* to the real Christian than this given in the sixth of the Hebrews. But the real Christian possesses all that the mere professor possesses: he also (as we showed in our last number) possesses *something more* than is here described; and perhaps if our correspondent should be led to weigh the matter over impartially and prayerfully, he may be led to see that this *deep-taught* apostle is here, in the sixth chapter, referring to the same *two* classes of character set forth in chapter the third of this Epistle to the Hebrews.

We hope our correspondent will receive our remarks as they are meant; for though we unhesitatingly dissent from him in his view of the scripture now investigated, we nevertheless like some things he has said, and think we can discover in him enough to persuade us of better things in him than of becoming an enemy to the Son of God, or to any of the laws of his heavenly kingdom.

Eds.

THE PRESENCE OF THE LORD IN THE ORDINANCE OF BELIEVERS' BAPTISM.

DEAR SIR,—It is written, "All thy saints shall bless thee," and surely the Lord has put a song of rejoicing into my mouth, and when he does so, and tunes my heart to sing it, it is then indeed that praise is comely, and I find it a good and pleasant thing to magnify his dear name; and as the people are said to know whereof they are glad, so I will tell you what my song is, just now, about: even the sweet manifestation I had of his blessed presence in the ordinance of believers' baptism. My soul had been, for some days previous, sunk in thick darkness; but, when that memorable day came, He who commanded light to shine, and it was so—even he, the blessed Sun of righteousness, began to dawn on my soul with healing on his wings. Truly my soul enjoyed some of the sweetest moments of communion with him I have ever known. I had but one object before my mind, and that was Jesus—all-precious Jesus. He was, indeed, "the chiefest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely." The language of my soul was, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is *none* on earth I desire beside thee." That beautiful hymn was sang, "Ashamed of Jesus;" but my soul was so full of the wonderful condescension of my glorious Immanuel to me, a poor vile worm, that I could not realize just then what shame was. But when these two lines were given out, my whole soul went with them,

"He sheds his beams of light divine
O'er this benighted soul of mine."

Ah! well do I remember once receiving a letter from a friend, in which she called the dear Redeemer hers, and spoke of him in such endearing terms that I wept because I did not possess the same feeling. To me he was only the great and terrible One who inhabiteth eternity, whose name was holy; but by his new name he was not known to me. I would have given worlds to have been able to use the same language, but I felt it did not belong to me; and yet, in my sorrow there was a mixture of gladness too, that some one was found who loved him, though I dared not say I did. But everlasting thanks to his precious name for looking on one so utterly unworthy, and bringing me into such a position that, in the sight of a heart-searching God, I feel at times constrained to say, Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee. Mr. Wells spoke in a blessed way at the ordinance; and, on Sunday morning, preached from these words, 1 John v. 7, the three witnesses on earth, "the spirit," (the preaching of the word,) "the water," (the ordinance

of believers' baptism,) "and the blood," (the ordinance of the Lord's supper;) "and these three agree in one," viz. to show forth the death of Christ; and, down to the end of time, these witnesses would be in the earth. He also referred to the verse preceding, and spoke of the essential difference between being made a Trinitarian by argument, and being a Trinitarian by the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost working salvation in the soul, and making that man a Trinitarian experimentally. May the Lord continue to bless him, and all his dear sent servants, and strengthen them, that they may, with all boldness, declare the whole counsel of God, and abide by their Master's order in all things!

Dear Sir, yours respectfully,

E. E. P.

PSALM LXVI. 8, 9.

"O bless our God, ye people, and make the voice of his praise to be heard: which holdeth our soul in life, and suffereth not our feet to be moved."

ONE distinguishing mark of a real believer is, that he stands up for the honour of God's name. So saith David, in Psalm xxvi. 8; "Lord, I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honour dwelleth." The saints are called upon, in the second verse of this psalm, to "sing forth the honour of his name." This name to them is precious; especially when he makes it as ointment poured forth, perfuming the affections of the soul. This name, received into the heart, with a little of that rich perfume of everlasting love, will make the weakest believer victorious. Mary, in weakness, rejoiced in it. "He that is mighty," saith she, "hath done to me great things; and holy is his name." And so sings Hannah. Yea, the name of Christ girds poor stumbling souls with strength; while the bones of the self-confident are broken. Then, as the name of Christ is mighty in himself and in his members, so it becomes a matter of solemn concern that we seek the honour of it above the honours of mortal men, or any carnal interest of ours. Oh that it could be said, more to the purpose, respecting the little assemblies of God's people, that they did with united voice "sound forth the honour of his name!"

The words of our text are a call to the saints to bless and praise God; and that in a twofold way:—1, for what he is in himself, essentially considered; and 2, for what he is to us, relatively considered. God, essentially considered, is the very fountain of all blessedness, and must be a perpetual spring of blessedness to himself: and as he hath poured forth his blessings upon his saints, so they are all indebted to him, and are called upon to praise him. 2. God relatively considered. The

saints are called upon to bless him in the grand relation which he bears to us in an everlasting covenant in Jesus Christ. The taking into union humanity with Divinity forms the relationship; the Father's love to Christ is the eternal bond of it; and the grace of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, flowing through that humanity, is the blessing that eternally crowns it. Oh, what a relationship is this, and what wonderful words! "I am a Father to Israel!" Many are the characters, and many are the acts and expressions which he bears towards his people; and all speak relationship. Two prominent acts are noticed in our text: 1. "He holdeth our souls in life;" 2. "He suffereth not our feet to be moved." 1. "Who holdeth our souls in life." What infinite kindness streams from our covenant God, in holding our poor, frail body in life, whose foundation is in the dust, and is crushed before the moth! But, more especially, he holdeth our souls in life. He, the second Adam, who first quickened it, keeps it alive. He, who lives eternally, says, we shall live also. Now the word "holdeth" signifieth also "to put into," and "to ordain." Now our souls were first ordained to this life by the unerring wisdom of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. The Father gives us this life in his Son; and the Son, as Head of the church, receives it for us; and the Holy Ghost puts us manifestly into it: so that being ordained unto eternal life, we must believe, persevere, and enter into glory.

A LITTLE ONE.

Yarmouth, December 14th, 1847.

MARTIN LUTHER'S ANXIETY IN 1530.

ONE day as Diedrich approached the Reformer's chamber he heard his voice, and remained motionless, holding his breath, a few steps from the door. Luther was praying; and his prayer, said the secretary, was full of adoration, fear, and hope, as when one speaks to a friend or father. "I know that thou art our Father and our God," said the Reformer, alone in his chamber, "and that thou wilt scatter the persecutors of thy children; for thou art thyself endangered with us. All this matter is thine; and it is only by thy constraint that we have put our hands to it. Defend us then, O Father!" The secretary, motionless as a statue in the long gallery of the castle, lost not one of the words that the clear and resounding voice of Luther bore to his ears. The Reformer was earnest with God, and called upon him with such unction to accomplish his promises, that Diedrich felt his heart glow within him. "Oh!" exclaimed he, as he retired, "how could not these prayers but prevail in the desperate struggle at Augsburg!"

Luther might also have allowed himself to be overcome with fear, for he was left in complete ignorance of what was taking place in the diet. A Wittenberg messenger, who should have brought him forests of letters (according to his own expression), having presented himself! "Do you bring any letters?" asked Luther. "No!" "How are those gentlemen?" "Well!" Luther, grieved at such silence, returned and shut himself up in his chamber.

Ere long there appeared a courier on horseback, carrying despatches from

so spiritually, whatever is contrary to the quickened conscience—to the heavenly affection of the soul—to the enlightened understanding—to the fear and love of God—to the incorruptible seed, which liveth and abideth for ever,—whatever is contrary to the soul thus formed for God, is, as every believer to his sorrow knows, detrimental to his spiritual health; it makes him low, and dull, and stupid, and feeble, and insensible, seeming to have no spirit to read, to meditate, to pray, to praise the Lord for his mercies, to go forth in the dance of them that make merry, or to feel hardly any interest in the gospel of the blessed God, or concern for his never-dying soul; and under this, he would, if the life within him were not incorruptible, the work of Christ infallible, and God unchangeable,—but for this, his sickness would indeed be unto death.

Dogs and swine may eat without harm that which would all but kill the sheep. The carnal man may live upon and be content with carnal things: not so the new-born heirs of heaven; they cannot even attempt to live upon husks, without soon feeling the mighty difference between the husks and the holy things of the altar of God.

But there is hope in Israel concerning this thing. The Lord has promised to restore health, and cure, and strength, and comfort; and does he not do so? Are there not reviving times when the believer can say, *He restoreth my soul*, and thus not suffering any deadly thing finally to hurt them? and does he not at times renew their strength? and hath he not said, *I will not leave you comfortless, I will come unto you*?

The Lord does not *arbitrarily* prohibit anything from his people, as though it was a grief to him to see them comfortable; for he doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men: he therefore afflicts of *necessity*—there is a *needs be*—our *good*, our *welfare*, our *real peace*, our *true prosperity* demand it; and what one soul that ever gave up all for the kingdom of God ever repented of the step it had taken? Who would undertake to prove that those who preferred the solitude and privations of the desert and all the tortures of martyrdom for Christ Jesus the Lord to “earth’s delusions”—who would undertake to prove that they were *unwise* in their choice?

The reason the grace of God teacheth us to deny all ungodliness is, that we should not be condemned with the world; and the reason we are exhorted to abstain from fleshly lusts is, because they war against the soul; and the reason we are driven out of the world’s friendship is, that we may live in the friendship of Jesus Christ our Lord.

But the second part of the object this dietetic law had, was the *separation* of the Israelites from other and unconsecrated people. All observant writers have noticed the great utility of this law to this end. Meal-time occurring several times every day kept this law in constant and powerful operation.

So the Christian spiritually needs his daily bread from heaven. While others are seeking their all in the earth, and saying unto God, *Depart from us*, we desire not the knowledge of thy ways, the Christian, when in his right mind, seeks to live on the holy realities which come down from heaven, and enters into the rest of the heavenly sabbath—is brought to feed upon, and is sheltered by the paschal Lamb, and looks forward to the great day of the feast, when God shall wipe away all tears from off all faces.

Thus, then, what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial? and what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? These cannot live together; wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean, and I will receive you, and be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

This, then, appears to us to be (including many things we have not named) the main drift of the meaning of this Old Testament law, setting before us truths of vital importance.

EDS.

A LETTER BY THE LATE MR. BURNETT.

MY DEAR FRIEND IN FREE GRACE UNION,—We are now entering on another year; time is progressing, and the counsels of eternity are unfolding. The purposes of our God are most steady, and are taking their due effects. All must be for the glory of Jehovah Jesus; for of him, and through him, and to him, are all things; to him be glory for ever and ever. Amen. It is the certainty we have of the stability of the divine counsels that quiets our minds amidst all the seeming confusion of this time state of things. Men, with all their boasted free agency—with all their schemes—with all their ardent pursuits—and with all the supposed magnitude of their busy littleness, are working away under the sovereign control and secret (yet invincible) overruling power of Him who hath ordered all things in his absolute decree, and hath sounded out, “My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.” He hath also said, “Mercy shall be built up for ever;” and as this building is to eternally magnify the riches of his goodness, so his wisdom shall be as manifest in the ultimate issue in having, ordering, and disposing of just so much scaffolding in every age as shall be necessary for effecting his designs and perfecting the plan he hath drawn for the glory of his great name.

This consideration affords great serenity amidst all the attacks made on us and to the perfect chain of free grace truths. For surely none whose minds are spiritualized can help discerning what a confirmed hatred there is in the minds of professors of the gospel in general to Christ being all in all. These covet the name of humble Christians, they inculcate the necessity for lowliness of mind; but touch them with unconditional blessedness, with Jehovah sovereignty in purpose, and acts with discriminating mercy, and the mask begins to slip, it is very soon loosened, for, like those of old, when our Lord discriminated in his discourse on the support of Elijah by the widow of Sarepta, and the cure of the leprous Syrian (Luke iv. 25, 28), all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things were filled with wrath, so with our pious people now, the same subject produces in measure the same effects, and a sad shipwreck follows of their pretended submission to the God of all grace. Nevertheless, the Lord God omnipotent reigneth, and in the midst of all is giving full efficacy to his precious boon. “All thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children. Hallelujah.” My sister in Christ, what shall I write about but him? what can we begin our correspondence with this new year more fitting for those who prove redemption than the universal chorus of the Redeemer, “Unto him that
 GOSPEL AMBASSADOR.] c [FEBRUARY, 1848.

loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever, Amen." Let us briefly examine our song of praise.

1. Here is our object; "Unto him," &c. Who is he? The self-existent and created, the self-existing Jehovah, and the created man, in union the God-man—the mystery of godliness; in whom are all the underived perfections, attributes, majesty, and glory of the Godhead, and all the beauty, holiness, excellency, tenderness, affection, and suitableness of the manhood—the Holy One of God, in whom all the delight of the glorious three in one centres—in whom were all the outgoings of Jehovah's eternal mind, and in and by whom all the good pleasure of his will is accomplished—the object of whom he testifieth, in whom his soul delighteth—the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person—the fountain and treasury of grace and glory—the head over all things to his body the church—in whom all the supercreation blessedness is contained, unchangeably secured, and inviolably certain—the anointed Saviour, whose sweet names are as ointment poured forth, anointed above his fellows, for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him, anointed to be the anointer of his fellows—an ocean fulness ever flowing—the abundant replenisher of all his family, from whose fulness they receive, grace for grace, all spiritual blessings, all communications of life, light, love, liberty, peace, joy, and strong consolation—Jesus the Saviour, with all qualifications, power, and commission to save to the uttermost—whose relative names and mediatorial offices, whose finished work and perpetual priesthood, whose faithful administrations and invincible power, afford his chosen and called ones an unceasing cause for holy triumph, sacred rest, and rich, oh, rich tranquillity of mind—this is our object, our alpha and omega, our first and our last, our all in all.

2. What is our theme of praise. He is our object, and what he is unto and hath done for us, is our subject.

"That loved us,"—pause. "Loved us," how with love beyond comparison we cannot fathom its depths, nor can we ascend its heights, we cannot explore its lengths, and the extensive breadths thereof surpass the utmost stretch of our finite capacity. Yet from the Sacred Word we learn its qualities; and, in the words of our song before us, may sound in highest notes its astounding productions. He hath said, "As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you," John xv. 9. Has the Father loved him with a love of boundless delight and complacency? He has. And has Christ so loved the church? He has. Has the Father loved him as his pure and perfect one? He has; for, unless Christ was purity and perfection

itself, the Father's love could not find rest, and centre in him. And has Christ so loved the church, has he loved her as his pure and perfect one? He has; for he tells her in round terms, she is his dove, his undefiled, that she is beautiful as Tirzah and comely as Jerusalem, and furthermore, that she, his love, is all fair, and there is no spot in her. Has the Father so loved Christ with an extensive love? for, in loving him he loved all in him and with the same love; for thus saith the Holy One to his Father, "For thou hast loved them as thou hast loved me." And has Christ so loved the church? He has; he hath loved them in himself, and their loveliness in him delights his heart, his Hephzibah is his delightful one. Has the Father loved him with an everlasting love? He has; for thus Christ speaks, "Thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." And has Christ so loved his own? He has; for thus he assures her, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love, and therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." Therefore this love is inseparable from its objects. Nothing shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. And nothing could or can separate Christ's love from us. His suretyship engagements were the fruit of his great and wonderful love, it respected his church in her exile state, her dreadful banishment as sunk by sin, her overwhelming misery in darkness and slavery to the prince of hell, and her alienated state of mind from him. Yet his love remained the same, nor did she cease to be the object of his spiritual concern. He became a sacrifice for sin, and he thereby put it clean away by one offering. He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified; and upon the virtue of his atonement the Holy Ghost bears this witness; Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. The sacrifice has purged, and purged once for all. Of old it was the blood which typically made atonement for the soul; and spiritually, the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, has truly made atonement both for soul and body, and this redemption is eternal.

The love of Christ, thus displayed in sin-atonement blood, is published through the gospel, and it is the means which draws the hearts of regenerate ones to love him. See how he loved us, is the continual sound of free grace. The testimony in the word is realised in their souls by the energy of the Holy Ghost, and our true spirituality consists in looking all our sins away.

3. Upon this is founded our royal priesthood,—“he hath made us kings and priests unto God.” He hath by his bloodshedding for ever set us free from the guilt and damning power of sin, and by faith in the virtue of his precious blood God the Spirit discharges us from the dread of sin. He turns the sense of guilt and condemnation out of the conscience, and keeps it

out by leading us to look unto Jesus, and Christ being kept in view we are freed from sin's usurping rage.

A self-righteous spirit is a servile spirit; all that tends to bondage is opposite to the gospel, for the latter is pure liberty; the spirit of adoption is a free spirit, a princely spirit, a victorious spirit, which overcomes the world, sin, and Satan, in believing. Our royal and priestly state is inseparably connected, and our royal and priestly garments are the same, Isa. lxi. 10; Ps. xlv. 7—9. So truly made one in spirit with our living Head, that in his reign we reign too. His gospel reigns through, and above all the opposition of men, and so in the spirit thereof we reign. We are in his kingdom of grace, and shall reign with him in his kingdom of glory, Rev. iii. 21. Our felicity cannot cease, nor our glory fade. As the anointed of the Lord with his Spirit we are clothed in priestly garments, fine linen, clean and white; these garments, with which our intellectual powers are clothed, bespeak our purity, our royalty, and our victory,—our freedom of access unto the Father (Eph. ii. 18.), in all the perfection of Him who is our acceptance with the Father, as our alone high-priest. We are not left standing without, as the priests in the temple were, while the high-priest was gone into the holiest of all on the day of expiation; but we go in with our high-priest, in all that spiritual faith and satisfaction we have of what he is now to us, as representing us within the veil, Heb. x. 19, 20. Our services are spiritual, our persons are accepted in him, and our prayers ascend in all the perfume and fragrant incense of his preciousness; we have no sacrifice to offer for sin, it is offered, and the offerer is gone in in all the virtue of it. We follow in after him in the faith thereof, and with our only sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving, that sin is no more. As the priests of old, who offered the sacrifice for sin, were to eat it, so as our sin is consumed in the sufferings of Him who was made our sin, so we spiritually feed on him, and prove the savour of his intercession in our souls. We come before the Lord to behold his glory, enjoy his favour, and be feasted with the provisions of his love, and to join in spirit with the living assembly of the church of the first-born in heaven and earth, in the exercise of ascribing to him, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing."

What shall I say more, than that my earnest prayers are for the increase of your holy triumph in the Rock of your salvation: may the plentiful dew of his grace refresh your spirit from day to day, and strengthen your intimacy with the Prince of peace! Amen.

Mrs. Burnett unites in every affectionate regard

With truly yours, J. BURNETT.

THE FIRST RESURRECTION.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE GOSPEL AMBASSADOR.

MY DEAR SIRs,—Being in company with a dear brother in the ministry he wished me to give my thoughts on the subject of “the first resurrection,” which are as follow; and if thought worthy an early insertion will oblige.

CALEB.

MY DEAR BROTHER,—Owing to other employ I have not been able till now to comply with your kind request in submitting my views on the subject of “*the first resurrection*,” which, in meekness, I now attempt to do: And, in reflecting, I find there are five kinds of resurrection, viz:—natural, political, spiritual, mystical, and real. On each of these a word or two.

1. *Natural*.—This takes in all those cases in which persons have returned to natural life; as the three instances in the history of Elijah and Elisha, the son of the widow of Nain, and those of Lazarus and Dorcas.

2. *Political*.—We have this in the history of Israel, when he returned from Babylon to Jerusalem. Through sin he had become politically dead, according to Ezek. xxxiii. 11; and his land and cities were left desolate; then, according to Ezek. xxxvii. 12, at the end of seventy years they were raised up again. As a *type* this embodies two or three other resurrections.

3. *Spiritual*.—This is found in the above, as evinced in the quickening and deliverance of regeneration. The former takes place by spiritual life imparted; and the latter by the raising the soul to hope and liberty from the bondage and condemnation of the law. This is sometimes taken for the first resurrection; but it is only the earnest thereof given for our comfort and peace.

4. *Mystical*.—The persons by this raised must be of a mystical character, as the two witnesses are. These are to be killed in a mystery; their dead bodies to lay three days in the street of mystery Babylon; after which they are, at the sound of a great voice, to be raised, and ascend to more than their former power, dignity, and glory. At this juncture, also, it appears that mystical Zion, now dying a gradual death, shall be awaked from her grave, shake herself from the dust of the earth, and put on her beautiful garments. Also, the dead prodigal, the Jewish nation, shall then, like the waters of the Dead Sea, return, and be grafted into Christ; and so these dead ones shall then be “as life from the dead,” in a mystical or figurative way.

5. *Real*.—By this I do not mean that the above are not real in their kind, but that this is that resurrection of the body to

an immortal state which forms an article in the creed of every true Christian: and I find this to be threefold, viz., that of the resurrection of our Lord, which is the firstfruits of them that sleep, and the pledge of the resurrection of his mystical body, the church; this resurrection itself; also that of the last judgment, when death and hell, the earth and sea, shall give up their dead. We now come to treat upon

The first resurrection, which is the middle fold of the above, and now found to be wrapped in much obscurity, because viewed as a detached fragment of a great whole, which, seen in its own beauty, would be found to contain this subject as a central and sparkling gem, surrounded with many other brilliants, all of which together constitute an object so beautiful and grand that the soul of the spectator would be all on fire, "if, by any means, he might attain to the resurrection of the dead." This sacred link is one in a chain of vast and wondrous events, which the ignorance of our minds, and infidelity of our hearts, will allow us neither to comprehend nor receive. For I feel sure that, unless we can behold the great scheme of redemption in all its parts, we can by no means get at those events of the future, as recorded on the page of prophecy, because any natural conception, linked with a spiritual one, is sure to misguide; and our mind being misguided, may, on forbidden ground, labour to raise the fabric of our future hopes, which, indeed, must be baseless and unsafe. But how are we to behold the perfect and complete plan of Jehovah? Let us look back to the origin of our own existence, and take notice that Adam was made the *lord* of the globe, and that beasts, birds, and fishes were subject to his will. We perceive that he held the kingdom under the tenure of obedience, in which failing the penalty was the loss of all, and *death*. This happened; and lo, the curse of God and the power of the devil make the whole creation groan and put on the funeral pall! All is subjected to vanity, to oppressive affliction! Without a REDEEMER all, all is lost! But as the *opening* for the introduction of the afore-conceived glorious scheme is made, behold the kinsman Redeemer appears in the same, and the seed of the woman proceeds to raise up that which had fallen; and this was threefold, viz., the souls of the elect, their bodies, and their estate, Adam, Abel, Seth, &c., and all the elect, down to the present time, have participated in the first part of the work; for the redemption of the soul, which is precious, has been effected by regeneration, and it ceaseth for ever: and thus far all these have shared in a spiritual resurrection, and by it been meetened for their inheritance. But as to the second part, which is the redemption of the body, that remains to be done both for the quick and the dead of the saints;

and this is both promised by God, and needed and longed for by them, as saith the apostle, "Even we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we groan within ourselves; waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body; for the creature, (i.e., the body,) shall also be delivered into the glorious liberty of the children of God." And so, as he says again, "He shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body," John also tells us the same truth, when he says, "When he shall appear, we shall be like him." This is the body immortalized by the redemption of that body in the first resurrection. But still this is but the second part of the great work; for the inheritance itself, as in the case of Ruth, must be both redeemed and brought back to its original condition, and that by nullifying the curse of God, and expelling the usurping prince of the power of the air from the domain of creation, and shutting him up in the abyss. Thus the redemption of the purchased possession shall take place at the times of the *restitution*; and the creation, comparatively, become new heavens and new earth, according to Isa. lxx. 17, and other places. And the *Redeemer* himself saith, "Behold, I make all things new." And then by the second Adam shall the name of the dead (*first Adam*) be raised up upon his inheritance; and the children of the first by nature, and then of the second by grace, shall take the kingdom which shall be everlasting; and all dominions shall serve and obey them. This is redemption threefold.

But *when* that of the body? The Scriptures are unanimous in saying, "When he shall appear." But when will he appear? Prior to the redemption itself. For as the Father has granted a redemption for the land, so he who redeems shall be revealed from heaven, and proceed to do his vast and miscellaneous work. Even as he ascended so shall he descend, and the trump of the archangel shall sound. "Behold he cometh;" and as in the twinkling of an eye, the *meetened* elect, like Elijah, shall be changed; one shall be taken, and another left. Immediately the sleeping dust of sainted martyrs, prophets, and apostles shall be reanimated, and, like sparkling cherubs, they spring to life, and meet their Lord in the air. The good man, who went to receive for himself a kingdom and return, is now come back, and is giving reward to his servants, and is saying, "Enter ye into the joy of your Lord:" and this they are to share with him a thousand years, Even so, Amen.

But *how* shall the dead appear? and with what body shall they arise? God shall give them a body as it hath pleased him; and to every seed, every elect grain, his own body. Not that body which was a natural, a gross, a terrestrial, an earthy body; but a new, a spiritual, a celestial, and an heavenly body,

which, being a child of the resurrection, shall be as the angels of God. And this body will have none of those mortal weaknesses, sexual propensities, nor earthly incumbrances it now has. But as the natural man cannot understand spiritual things, so cannot sense and reason understand how God will do this; nor is it my concern, because it is enough for faith to know he will do it. And as to natural men and mere letter-preachers trying to explain it, they can no more touch it than they can touch the sun.

The bodies thus sharing in this first resurrection are those that now constitute the temple of God, which, being changed, shall be "the tabernacle of God which shall be with men;" just as our Lord was with his disciples after his resurrection. And the saints, *not having participated in the glorious change*, shall see and hold converse with these, as of old the patriarchs held converse with angels; for the changed saints shall take the place of angels, especially of fallen ones then cast out, as saith the apostle, "For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come, of which we speak. But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man? . . . Thou hast put all things under his feet. But this, as yet, we see not; but we see Jesus, and we see him bringing many sons unto glory"—the glory of the new world; and we see that he shall reign in righteousness, and his princes shall decree justice, and judge both angels and men.

As I have studied brevity I have tried to cramp my ideas into small compass; but if, dear brother, you perceive any analogy of truth, and you wish it, I will more largely give my thoughts on the threefold redemption work of our glorious Lord Jesus Christ.

I am, in the treasure house of truth,

Jan. 5, 1848.

your fellow steward, ———

LETTER BY A WESLEYAN MINISTER, AND ANSWER THERETO.

Charlesworth, Derbyshire, Nov. 29, 1847.

REV. SIR,—I am told by report that you intend to make another visit to Charlesworth, on Thursday next, for the purpose of more fully establishing the doctrines you advanced at Charlesworth on the 25th of the present month. I suppose that you think that such an establishment of the doctrines you advanced to be necessary, as you did not logically and scripturally prove them on that occasion, and mere declamation and assertion will not be received in the stead of plain scriptural arguments. And for the above reasons I think it necessary to state more particularly what at least appears to me to be some of the gross inconsistencies of your sermon. And, if my memory serves me

correctly, I think that the leading topics of your sermon at issue with the views of the "Wesleyan Methodists" were the doctrines of "*Particular Redemption*," of "*Final Perseverance*," and of "*Unconditional Election to Eternal Life*."

These topics I shall notice more particularly and distinctly. And first, as to the doctrine of "*Particular Redemption*," you stated, "that if an Arminian were to tell you that Jesus Christ died for all mankind, that you could not believe him because your Bible did not say so." Now the following are a few of those passages of Scripture on which we ground our faith of the doctrine of *Universal Redemption*, viz., Heb. ii. 9, "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man;" and then, again, 2 Cor. v. 14, 15, "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again." Again, 1 John ii. 1, 2; "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." And now, Sir, unless you can make it out that "every man" means only a part of mankind, and unless you can prove that Jesus Christ dying "for all," viz., all that were dead, and those only the elect; then those for whom he never died were not in a state of death. And unless you can prove that "ours only" is synonymous with the "sins of the whole world," then the above passages of Scripture are against your doctrine of *Particular Redemption*. And, Sir, such passages are found in "our Bibles," and they do not "spoil them either;" no; they are the very glory of divine revelation; and without such passages the Bible would not be a perfect revelation of the infinite attribute of the love of God. And we therefore conclude that our view of redemption is most befitting with the infinite attributes and perfections of God; and with the fact, that Jesus Christ took upon himself human nature, the common humanity of all, and consequently that he became the world's representative and Redeemer; and that the state of our fallen world rendered such a manifestation of love absolutely necessary, will not be questioned, I believe, by yourself.

I shall therefore conclude this part of my letter with a quotation from a living author, a minister of the Independent body, the Rev. John Harris, D.D., "*Mammon*," p. 36, "Nearly akin to this is what, for the sake of convenience, may be denominated the selfishness of the pulpit; that fearful spirit which

presumes to limit what God meant to be universal,—the overtures of redemption to a ruined world. It daringly undertakes to ‘number Israel,’ to determine not only that few will be saved, but who that few will be. Its ministers, faithful to their creed, stand before the cross, and hide it; lest men should see it who are not entitled or intended to behold it; a danger which they jealously avoid, a responsibility they would tremble to incur. The gospel charters redemption to the world; but they have heard that there are divine decrees; and until they can logically reconcile their views of the divine inflexibility with the universality of the divine compassion, the charter must stand over, and souls perish unwept; and the gospel of Christ, God’s great gift, the adequate image of the infinitude of his love, be branded with the stigma of exclusiveness.”

Another topic on which you dwelt was that of the “*Final Perseverance of Saints* :” and now, Sir, if you would confine yourself to what the expression simply means, the “perseverance of saints,” then there would be no difference in our views, but when you contend for the final perseverance of sinners in the way to heaven, then, Sir, the Scriptures and ourselves are at issue with your sentiments. You stated that Peter was as much a Christian when he cursed and swore, and denied his Lord, as he ever was either before or after; that David was as much a Christian when he committed adultery and murder as he was either before or after. Does this look like the perseverance of saints? nay, is it not evidently the perseverance of sinners? I shall now state a few of those passages of Scripture on which we ground our belief of the proper doctrine of the final perseverance of saints, viz. Job xvii. 9, “The righteous also shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger.” And now, Sir, I hope you will not say that being “righteous,” and having “clean hands” means cursing and swearing, &c. Prov. iv. 18, “But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.” But will you say that being “just,” and shining “more and more” are synonymous with cursing and swearing, &c.? And again, Matt. xxiv. 13, “But he that shall endure unto the end the same shall be saved;” surely cursing and swearing, &c., are not the evidences of enduring grace? And then, again, Rom. ii. 7, “To them who, by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, and honour, and immortality, eternal life;” but are cursing and swearing, &c., patient continuance in well doing? Surely not. Again, Rev. ii. 10, “Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life;” but does cursing and swearing, &c., mean Christian fidelity unto death? Oh, dear! “O my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, mine honour, be not thou united.” I shall now point out a few

passages of Scripture which I think are against your view of the doctrine of final perseverance, viz., 1 Chron. xxviii. 9, "If thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever." But if cursing and swearing, &c., are not the opposite of seeking God and the evidences of forsaking him, why then I do not know what they are. Again, Heb. x. 38, "Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him." Now you tell us, Sir, that the elect are as much in the favour of God when they are cursing and swearing, &c., as when they are just and living by faith; the apostle's doctrine is just the contrary. And again, 2 Peter ii. 20—22, "For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed, to her wallowing in the mire." You tell us, Sir, that a man is quite as safe when entangled in the world as when he overcomes the world, yea, quite safe when he is cursing and swearing, &c. The apostle believes just to the contrary; but oh, what will not blind bigotry and mistaken zeal believe?

Another topic on which you dwelt in your sermon was that of "*Unconditional Election to Everlasting Life*." You told us that there were no conditions connected with the subject of salvation; that God had done everything, that man need do nothing, except just to look on. And here I would wish to state my views of the doctrines of grace. I believe that salvation is all of the free grace of God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, without the merit of works, agreeably to what the apostle states, Rom. ix. 11, "That the purpose of God, according to election, might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth." Again, Rom. xi. 5, 6, "There is a remnant according to the election of grace. And if by grace, then is it no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work." And here the apostle lays down the great principle, or plan, on the ground of which God saves the world; but the great doctrine of salvation by grace, without the merit of works, does not destroy the great doctrine of justice; of damnation by works, that is, by the works of sin; and consequently that good works are required as a condition, or, in other words, if you like the term better, as fruits and evidences of the grace of God. I shall now refer you to a few passages of Scripture which prove the truth of

this proposition; and consequently destroy the doctrine of "unconditional election to eternal life." See 2 Pet. i. 10, "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall." Does giving "diligence," and doing "these things," imply no condition? Are they just doing nothing, or merely looking on? Again, Rev. xxii. 14, "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." Now, is not doing the commandments of God evidently the condition of our eternal life,—and that having right to the tree of life implies something more than doing nothing, or merely looking on? Again, Matt. vii. 21, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." And if Jesus Christ spoke the words of truth and soberness, then the saints' eternal salvation involves an important condition, and that condition is doing the will of God, and must imply doing something more than doing nothing or merely looking on. Again, John v. 29, "They that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." Now you tell us that good works are of no avail, and that evil works are no injury, in the affairs of man's salvation. Jesus Christ tells us to the contrary: such is the importance attached to good works and evil works by the Son of God, that the one leads to heaven and the other leads to hell. Whether must I receive Mr. Striuger's gospel or the gospel of the Son of God? Again, see Matthew xxv. 34—40, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me:" who will dare to say then that good works are not rewardable, and that evil works are not punishable in the day of eternity? for just upon the same principle will the wicked be condemned. "Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not." Pray, Sir, is all this doing nothing, or merely looking on? And now, Sir, I have noticed the leading principles of your discourse, and I think I have clearly shown that your doctrines of "*Particular Redemption, of Final Perseverance, and Unconditional Election to Eternal Life,*" have no foundation in the truth of God. I have not

stooped to notice the unkind expressions and opprobrious names you thought proper to heap upon the Arminians, as "merit-mongers," "would do-somethings," as bringing "wheelbarrowsful," and "handcartsful" of good works into the streets of London: take care, Sir, lest Christ should say to you, "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these my little ones, ye did it unto me." But, however, if your sermon be a fair specimen of your metropolitan divinity—why, then, poor London!

I am, a lover of truth,

WILLIAM STAFFORD.

To the Rev. — Stringer, Baptist Minister, London.

ANSWER TO THE ABOVE.

WE regret that Mr. Stafford should allow himself to be carried away by his antipathy into a misrepresentation of Mr. Stringer's meaning. Mr. Stafford must, in his own conscience, *know* that Mr. Stringer did not, for one moment, intend a word in favour of sin. Nor did he intend to insinuate that the falls of the people of God as recorded in the Bible are the way to heaven. All he evidently meant was, that as the people of God are complete in Christ after the order of the new covenant, they are for ever safe as to their final possession of glory, but their *practical* safety from the evil of this world is another thing; here they are in danger, not indeed of falling into perdition, but of falling into the hands of the enemy, and piercing themselves through with many sorrows; they, therefore, daily cry to God for that daily bread from heaven which strengtheneth man's heart to stand against the wiles of the devil, and, having done all, to stand.

Mr. Stringer might have been a little incautious in some of his expressions, but it betrays a meanness as well as a lurking enmity in the mind and heart of Mr. Stafford to take advantage of this; but if Mr. Stringer were wrong in some of his expressions (which we are not sure that he was), Mr. Stafford is wrong in something infinitely more important; he (Mr. Stafford) is wrong, not in the form of a few passing expressions merely, but in the *solemn and vital principles of the gospel itself*; and he appears to us to know neither the Scriptures nor the power of God. This may seem strong language, but if a tree is to be known by its fruits, then, if this be the rule to go by, and if Mr. Stafford be a regenerated man, he has a discipline to undergo that will produce fruits very different from the errors and enmities with which he is now laden.

We proceed to answer his letter under two distinct propositions.

First, that he deludes himself with the notion that he is a believer in free grace, when at the same time he is not.

Secondly, that he wrests the Scriptures, and darkens counsel with words without knowledge.

There is, says Mr. Stafford, a *remnant according to the election of grace*. We, then, here see that election is of grace. Now, then, *when* was this election, and what was the *principle* upon which it was founded?

We are assured (Eph. 1st), that this election was before the foundation of the world; and that *all* spiritual blessings needful to make the people holy, and to present them blameless before God in love, were then and there bestowed: election, therefore, has its date in eternity. And now what is the principle upon which that election was founded? We are, Rom. ix. 11, assured that the election is *independent* of either the good or the evil of the creature. It was, therefore, entirely of *grace*; so that, in election God had mercy on whom he would have mercy. In this department, then, the people are *safe*, *unless* they should become unknown to God, and this cannot be, for he knew them when he chose them; and the apostle gives us to understand that the Lord still knoweth them that are his; and that this, his special and intimate knowledge of them, is one of the seals of their *security*, and in entire accordance with this security is his determinate counsel concerning them; for whom he did thus foreknow he did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son. Now mind, all this was done for them while they were in their *deformity*, so that any and all conformity follows as a consequence; and, therefore, it is not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy hath he saved us by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost. So that regeneration is as much of God as are election and predestination. This important department is beautifully set forth in the epistle to the Ephesians, 2nd chap., so that not one of the sheep can be lost through any failure in the matter of effectual calling or regeneration; and, as to redemption, that is eternal; and, as to justification and sanctification, Christ Jesus the Lord is made these unto them; and, as to final perseverance, the redeemed can stop nothing short of final glory; and, as to evidential good works, the Lord puts his laws into their minds, and writes them in their hearts; he gives unto them the spirit of grace and supplication, and they look on Him whom they have pierced, and mourn for him; and God accepts no good works as evidences of interest in him; but those works, which arise from that faith, worketh by the love of the truth.

Now, if any of the objects of God's everlasting love can be lost, then, *where* and how can this thing be? They cannot

be separated from election, because election is independent of good or evil in the creature ; nor from predestination, for that is according to the good pleasure of Jehovah's will ; nor from regeneration, for the *redeemed shall return*, and come to Zion ; nor, from Christ Jesus, for he is their all in all. Nor can they be lost as unbelievers or enemies, for they are " saved by grace through faith ; and that not of themselves, it is the gift of God." And the Holy Ghost sheds abroad the love of God in their hearts. Nor can they be lost for want of strength to hold out to the end, for, as their days, so shall their strength be.

But Mr. Stafford seems to know not enough of his own heart, or of the terrible majesty of the law of God, or of the distinction between the headship of the first Adam and the headship of the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, or of the covenant that is waxed old, and that new covenant which is after the power of an endless life, to receive these truths. What a mockery, what a self-delusion, for Mr. Stafford to pretend to believe that salvation is from first to last of grace, when he at the same time carries a spear with him which pierces the gospel to the very heart, and nails that would transfix and make the gospel of God weak and helpless ; and all in order that blind and haughty worms may bring in their supposed sovereignty, and that in rebellion against the sovereignty and righteous judgment of God ; at the same time dignifying this rebellion with several titles, such as *responsibility, charity, good works, cultivation of grace, &c.*, and so *they wrap it up*. Mr. Stafford's gospel is divided against itself ; therefore cannot stand. It is yea and nay, therefore if one part be confirmed, the other part is made void. If salvation be of grace, then the objects and subjects of that grace cannot be lost ; for where grace reigns at all it reigns through the righteousness of Christ unto *eternal* life ; where then is creature doing or boastings ? *They are excluded*. If, on the other hand, any part of eternal salvation be of works, then grace is made void, and thus it is that Mr. Stafford frustrates the grace of God ; he holds two directly *opposite* principles, and how he can be a good servant to either of those masters we know not ; for according to one principle the Lord brings *all* the good things needed for our eternal welfare ; and, as he is the entire author of salvation, all the glory redounds to him. But, on the other hand, Mr. Stafford holds that the love of God is not so strong, nor the work of Christ so efficacious, nor the good work in the heart so sure to go on, nor the promise so certain, nor God so unchangeable and without variableness, but that he may hate, condemn, forsake, and destroy to-morrow those whom he loves, justifies, dwells in, and abides by to-day. Now, to prevent this dreadful revolution between God and the soul, Mr. Stafford brings in sundry good things which the

creature is to do, and of course the more there is done by the creature the less there is for the Lord to do ; so, of course, the love of God, the salvation of Christ, and work of the Holy Ghost, are brought to mere nothings. We do not suppose Mr. Stafford to be conscious of thus perverting the gospel of God, but it does appear that his admitting salvation is of grace, is, to say the least of it, a piece of mere *formality*, for it is pretty clear to which side his mind most strongly leans, that the doctrine of free will is a much warmer fire to his heart than the doctrine of free grace.

As Mr. Stafford's gospel is divided against itself, we do not believe it to be of God ; and, if a man have any feeling, the first chapter to the Galatians is enough to strike terror into the mind of that man who brings *another* gospel.

Now, Sir, we respectfully but solemnly put to you the following questions :—

Can you hope, according to your own sentiments, to stand with a good conscience before God if you do not do your part faithfully, and so be able to look up and say, God, I thank thee that I am not as other men ; for, when thou didst invite me to come to thee, though I had no better chance than others to come, and might have refused to come, for it was not any quickening power of thine that brought me, but my own free will and discretion ; God, I thank thee that I am not as other men, or even as this Thomas Stringer, who can work out his own salvation only as thou art pleased to work in him to will and to do ; and, if he should get to heaven, he will not have to thank himself for it ; but as for me, I come to heaven upon no such unreasonable terms ; I do my mighty part, as I have, Lord, helped forward to perfection the work thou didst begin, and as to how much of the glory is due to me, I will leave, Lord, to thine own righteous judgment ; for thou wilt not, Lord, be unrighteous to forget that it is not owing *exclusively*, to *thy* goodness that I am saved, but in great part to *my own discretion*.

Now, Sir, if you are true to your own sentiments, the above is the language you must adopt ; for if your not being lost is owing not exclusively to God, but to your own discretion, and that you would, notwithstanding all that God may do, be lost, but for your own prudence and care preventing the same ; that as you take one essential part of the work to yourself, you may (supposing you really perform this work), take the glory due unto you. We, of course, cannot think that you would like to use such language, yet such is the language you hold, whether you see it or not.

Again : can you now, in your present state, appeal to an heart-searching God, and plead *before him* one thing you have ever done to help forward your own salvation ; either you can or

you cannot; if you can, let us know what it is; if you cannot, are you an honest man to preach that to others which you yourself have never practised?

Again: how can you join in the new song which attributes all the work, from first to last, to God? how can you feel that it is of the Lord's mercies that you are not consumed, when at the same time you believe in your very soul, that, but for your own prudence and care, you should have been in hell? how can you look God in the face, and say, he hath brought you into the heavenly land by his everlasting salvation, when you at the same time inwardly believe that it was your own perseverance that turned the tide in your favour? Would there not be, then, a hollowness in your praises to God? Would he not detect the lurking thought of self-gratulation? Would he not see that your heart was not wholly with him? Would he not see that you had not altogether done with old Adam? Would he not see that you had undergone no real change of raiment—that you had not on the wedding-garment? And, if the final and certain triumph of his people be a truth offensive to you *now*, what would it be when unfolded in perfection? “Be not deceived, God is not mocked; for what a man soweth, that shall he also reap.”

Thus, then, it appears to us that Mr. Stafford *deludes* himself with the notion that he is a believer in free grace, when, at the same time, *he is not*.

We now proceed to our second proposition; viz.: *that he wrests the Scriptures, and darkens counsel with words without knowledge.*

Before we notice severally the scriptures quoted by Mr. Stafford,—before doing this we will lay down that which appears to us to be the right and proper rule of interpretation and judgment in the matter now under review, nor shall we find it difficult to show that Mr. Stafford's gospel, not only as we have shown, stands divided against itself, but that it also divides the Bible against itself—that it sets the Book of God at variance with itself.

We must show also, in few words, that Mr. Stafford's gospel is utterly defective in *circumstantial* as well as in testimonial proof; so that for Mr. Stafford to make full proof of his ministry, and to show himself a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, are both alike utterly *impossible*; for, even according to his own showing, the issue of his conflict is very uncertain; and if he has begun to build he has no assurance that he shall be able to finish.

But to the right rule of judgment—to the law and to the testimony.

Such is our state by the fall, that whatever may be our sense

of right and wrong, *morality*,—whatever may be our powers of reason,—whatever may be our bodily powers to gird ourselves, and go whither we list,—whatever these powers may be in their *own provinces*,—they have no power to rise into things supernal. The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

Such, then, is our state by the fall, that nothing but regeneration can bring a sinner out of this state. Ye must be born again; and the Father quickeneth *whom he will*; and the Son quickeneth *whom he will*; and it is the Spirit that quickeneth, but the *flesh profiteth nothing*.

Now as the ever blessed God hath, in election, in redemption, in *special* calling, and preservation to his heavenly kingdom, as he hath in all these mercy on whom he will have mercy, salvation is entirely of grace, and this grace infallibly reigns through righteousness unto eternal life; thus showing that all whose names were from the foundation of the world written in the Lamb's book of life, Rev. xvii. 8, shall enter finally into the city of God. It therefore follows, that all doctrines, however supported by the *letter* of Scripture, all doctrines contrary to this plain and positive truth are false, and must be rejected as such: all interpretations, however feasible, general, or popular, all interpretations contrary to the certain salvation of Israel, are false.

And thus it is if the words "*world*," "*whole world*," "*every man*," "*all men*," be not understood and received in accordance with the circumstances to which they belong; if not thus received, we make the word of God clash with itself. And here it is that Mr. Stafford so greatly errs. He has no certain standard of interpretation and judgment, but that of his own *imagination*; he is led more by the mere sound, than by the right and proper sense of the word. But as his gospel makes the God of truth contradict himself, so Mr. Stafford's gospel is in *circumstantial* proof utterly *defective*. He says (at least we understand him to mean) that God loved the whole human race; that Christ died for the whole human race; that the Holy Spirit strives with the whole human race.*

Mr. Stafford, we suppose, admits also that there is a *hell*, and that *some* of the human race are lost.

What *proof*, then, does Mr. Stafford give that God ever loved these? for where God fixes his love, he gives some proof of his love. All whom he has loved he has blessed with all spiritual blessings, imputed their sins to Christ, and begets

- * The Holy Spirit strove in the *testimony* of his word for the reformation of the antediluvians, as also with the Jewish nation, and in which the Holy Ghost may be and is resisted; but the operations of his power are *another* thing; in these all nations before him are as nothing; in these he cannot be resisted; the dry bones must rise.

them by his power unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible; undefiled, and that fadeth not away. God will never allow those whom he loves to be lost; no, for the beloved of the Lord shall dwell in safety.

Again, what *proof* does Mr. Stafford give that Christ died for those who are lost? Christ laid down *his* life for the sheep; and these by nature are sinners, ungodly, *without strength*, yet they were his sheep. They were as sheep going astray. Regeneration does not *make* them sheep, but only *proves* them to be sheep; they were sheep *before* they heard the Shepherd's voice. He calls his sheep, and they follow him, and shall never perish.

Again, what *proof* does Mr. Stafford give that the Holy Spirit laboured to become a spirit of grace and supplication to those now lifting up their eyes in hell? What *proof* does Mr. Stafford give that the Holy Spirit could not raise the dry bones in the valley, or transform Peter's wild beasts, Acts x., into holy men of God?

Mr. Stafford's gospel is, then, in *circumstantial* proof utterly *defective*; as the end of the world will not confirm, but confound such a gospel.

But is the gospel of God thus defective? We answer, no. The heavens and the earth may pass away; but his words shall not pass away. His elect shall be gathered together from the four winds, and shall live in the everlasting *proof* that God hath loved them, that Christ hath died for them, that the Holy Spirit quickened and guided them into all truth: and the others shall live to *prove* that God never loved them, that Christ laid down his life for the sheep, but not for the goats; and that the Holy Ghost left them in their own place under the law and its curse; that they are vessels not of mercy but of wrath, not of honour but of dishonour.

According to Mr. Stafford's gospel, God is unable to show mercy if the creature should resist.

Why does not Mr. Stafford put law and gospel into similar positions, and hold that while, on the one hand, God is unable without the concurrence of the creature to show mercy, so, on the other hand, that he is, without the consent of the creature, unable to execute judgment. The one would be quite as true as the other.

Thus, then, to take the words "*world*," "*all men*," &c., in the universal sense, is to put to them a meaning which can never be made good, and truly the Scriptures would be broken.

But let the above words be received in accordance with the circumstances to which they belong, then we can receive all the Bible in entire *harmony with itself*.

Thus every man, Heb. ii. 9, will mean the *many* sons spoken of in the connexion.

2 Cor. v. 15 will mean, that if Christ died for *all* his people then were *all* dead in the fall, otherwise they would not have *all* needed his death; and that he died for them all, that they which live should not live unto themselves, but unto him that died for them, and rose again. *They which live.* They do not yet *all* live; but as in Adam *all* these died, so in Christ shall these be made alive. But they do not yet all live, either naturally or spiritually; but they which do *spiritually* live are to live not unto themselves, but unto him who died for them, and rose again.

1 John ii. 2, will mean not for the Jews only, but for the Gentiles also of every nation under heaven, of the whole world, that is, as the *event will show*, some out of all nations, kindreds, peoples, and tongues.

It is *not* said that he died for all that were dead; which would be very different from saying, those for whom he died were all dead. This, and to die for all that were dead, are very different things. Therefore we need not prove that those for whom he did not die were not dead; seeing it is *not* said that he died for all that were dead, but all for whom he died were dead. But there are thousands for whom he did not die, that were, are, and will be dead. We leave Mr. Stafford to prove either that Christ died for the goats, or that they ever had spiritual life.

We need not prove that "*ours only*" is synonymous with "*the whole world*," for this would be simply running into the absurdity of saying the word Gentiles means Jews, that all nations mean the one Jewish nation. We leave this, also, to Mr. Stafford.

Mr. Stafford thinks his "view most *befitting* the *infinite* attributes and *perfections* of God." Yes, certainly; to see his creatures, in spite of all he can do, go to perdition, and himself unable to save them, though he strive with all his might so to do. To us, this certainly does not appear very befitting to the perfections of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.

But let us follow Mr. Stafford in his protest against final perseverance.

The righteous shall hold on his way, (true,) and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger (true); and so it is written, Whom he justified, them he also glorified.

He that endureth to the end shall be saved (true); and none will but where the work is real: and he that begins the good work will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.

Rom. ii. 7, To them who by patient continuing in well-doing,

&c. ; and it is written, Mine elect *shall* long enjoy the work of their hands, and they shall go from strength to strength in well-doing. But has Mr. Stafford ever yet even began *spiritual* well-doing, the well-doing of the faith of God's elect ? If his beginning be wrong, will his end be right ? if the root be evil, can the ultimate fruit be good ?

Faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life. So it is written, This God is our God for ever and ever ; *he will be our guide even to death.*

1 Chron. xxviii. 9, If thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever. This is the language of the old covenant, and pertained not to Solomon's eternal salvation, but to his welfare and duties as king of Israel. He fell ; he was cast off ; he never recovered his kingly glory ; but he was raised up *spiritually*, and became a preacher of the gospel of God, see Eccles. first and twelfth chapters. He wrote the Song of Songs ; and knew the Lamb's bride to be all fair, and that there could be no separation.

Heb. x. 38, God never had any pleasure in apostates. These are Christians only in name. They never, in *reality*, belonged to any but dogs and swine ; and, therefore, return to their own company. If they had been of the good seed, they would (if we are to believe the apostle) have continued in the way of righteousness, 1 John ii. 19.

Relatively the Christian is as much in the favour of God one time as another ; but manifestly and practically are another thing. 'Mr. Stringer may perhaps have omitted this distinction, Mr. Stafford eagerly takes advantage of this omission.

But to proceed to Mr. Stafford's attack upon the sovereignty of God in the election of his people. 2 Pet. i. 10, Make your calling and election sure, &c. Mind it does *not* say, make election and calling sure. No, these are sure enough ! But make *your* calling and election sure. Here are believers exhorted to diligence, and to seek the proof of their calling, and assurance of *their* election,—and that these to them would be paths of safety ; for if ye do these things ye shall never fall, or prove yourselves to be mere professors. Why should Mr. Stafford refer to such a scripture as this ; for what has his gospel to do either with certainty or assurance ? What is his gospel but a *miserable jumble of uncertainties* ?

Rev. xxii. 14, Blessed are they that do his commandments, &c. They do, by faith in his name and love to his truth, keep his commandments, and have *evidential* right to the tree of life. They do follow the Lord's will and command in contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. These will have an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of their Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Those that have done good, to the resurrection of life; those that have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation. To do good is to do *right*; and by that faith which worketh by love they do that which is right, are justified by faith, and have peace with God.

To do evil is to do that which is wrong, as Mr. Stafford does in fighting against the truth of God. And thus the works of faith are right and good; the works of unbelief are wrong and evil. Thus those that have done good, viz., that which is good in the gospel sense, (for by the works of the law shall no flesh living be justified,) shall come forth to the resurrection of life. But the unbeliever, the enemy to the truth, whose works are acts of enmity against the truth, shall come forth to the resurrection of condemnation. So that Mr. Stafford is not far off from the truth, in *words*, when he says, The wicked and the righteous will be, one condemned, the other justified, upon one principle, that of *evidence*. That is, the works of faith will evidence for the righteous, and works of unbelief will evidence against the wicked. The works of the one *proving* them to be friends, the works of the others proving them to be enemies. And thus it is that his enemies must perish; but those that love him shall be as the sun when he goeth forth in his might, and they shall rest for ever and ever. So that the doctrine of universal redemption has no foundation in the word of God.

The piece of flippant rhetoric and meretricious oratory, quoted by Mr. Stafford from Dr. Harris, is hardly worth notice. It may go for what it is worth. It goes to show that the wisdom of the world is foolishness with God. Still we will just remind the Doctor that with all his philanthropy he will never be able to make the cross universal enough to turn goats into sheep, nor save those whom God in sovereignty and righteous judgment passes by, but whose cause Mr. Stafford and Dr. Harris undertake to plead.

Nor can the Doctor's ungodly sneer at the counsels of God overturn those counsels, nor move the people of God from them. The Lord keepeth the feet of his saints. They are preserved for ever; but their enemies shall be silent in darkness. And he that loveth and maketh a lie shall, dying in this state, have his portion in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone. We believe Mr. Stafford's gospel to be nothing but a *fatal* perversion of the Word of God. Eds.

SECOND CHAPTER OF GENESIS.

In this chapter we have, first, *termination of creation work*. Here is *what* was finished—the heavens and the earth, and all

the host of them ; and so sure as the first heavens and the first earth were finished, and all the host of them, so sure shall the new heavens and the new earth, and all the host of them, be completed.

We have here, also, *when* they were finished : the *sixth* day it should be, though by some means the word *seventh* has crept into the original text, but the Septuagint reads, not *ebdomée*, seventh, but *ectée*, *sixth*, and this is, no doubt, the right reading. And thus, on the *sixth* day God ended his work which he had made ; and is it not remarkable—is it not a most interesting coincidence, that the Lord Jesus, the sensible sinner's dearest hope, was crucified, not on the first, nor on the second, nor on the third, nor on the fourth, nor on the fifth day of the week, but on the *sixth* day of the week ? Yes, it was on the *sixth* day of the week that he cried with a loud voice, saying, " It is FINISHED," and gave up the ghost, to labour, to sorrow, to die no more for ever.

And then, we have here the glory that follows. The glory is two-fold, and includes all that we can need for time or eternity, *rest* and *holiness*. They rest from their labours, and are free from sin ; blest of God, they shall have nothing to do but enjoy the unsearchable riches of Christ.

Plantation. " The Lord God planted a garden," &c. The garden of Eden lay on or by the river Euphrates, but whether near the Persian gulf, or near the present town of Bagdad, or in Armenia, by the source of the Euphrates, are questions upon which biblical criticism is much divided. They are questions both of uncertainty and of minor importance, and though all four of the rivers appear to have survived the flood, and to have been in being in the time of Moses, yet only two out of the four, Euphrates and Hiddekel, (now called the Tigris,) can with any certainty be recognized. The notion of Josephus, that the Jordan and the Nile are the other two rivers, is too absurd to be received. The Red Sea, which is supposed originally to have joined the Mediterranean, separates the Nile many, many miles from the other three rivers. How, then, could the African Nile be at all connected with the garden of Eden ?

We may gather from the closing chapters of Ezekiel, and from the last two chapters of the Revelation, that this garden was a type of the church and paradise of God.

The garden was planted by the Lord, and the Lord God himself *made* every tree pleasant to the sight and good for food *freely* to grow, and the garden was *spontaneously* and well watered, and the rivers spread themselves far and wide, perhaps to show that the gospel should spread itself far and wide, and bring to life, and sustain in life, thousands of otherwise perishing sinners from the east, the west, the north, and the south : the

gospel meaning of all this will, by the spiritual mind, be readily perceived.

But we have *legislation*. "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."

This was God's own tree, consecrated to himself. This tree appears to have been pretty close to the tree of life, "that God with man might dwell;" but it was not a *gospel* dwelling, but only a law dwelling, therefore God and man are *not* both at *one* table. Man has his portion as a creature and as a servant; and God has his portion as a Creator, and as a Lawgiver and Master. Adam had nothing to do but live, look to the order of the garden, and reign over all other creatures, and thus be easy and happy. He has no authority or necessity to seek any other or higher good than that which he now possesses; as, between that *higher* good and the good he now has stands a law of prohibition, and that, therefore, in reaching after this *higher* good, he would violate the law and be entangled in the *penalty*, while the higher good would be altogether out of his reach, and the tree of knowledge would, by his touch, be, as it were, brought down to a level with the tree of *creature* life. Adam would be thus attempting to make himself equal with God.

It is called the tree of the knowledge of good and evil because it was the *symbol*, the standing *sign* of the *law*; it was, as I have said, God's own tree; and it was to Adam a visible sign and a visible *assurance* that if he abstained therefrom he should see no evil. This tree, therefore, gave him daily the remembrance—the knowledge that he should, if he touch nor taste not, continue to enjoy good. Thus he had nothing to fear. The tree, by every leaf, by every fruit, by every breeze, and perhaps by its fragrance, smiled upon him. He was safe, God was faithful, man was happy; but if this tree of knowledge of good and evil had been removed, it must have disturbed the happiness of Adam; he might have reflected thus, The tree is gone—the symbol of my kind Creator's presence is gone—the garden is solitary—God hath forsaken me—how do I know, and what assurance have I that some evil will not befall me? for I have heard of *death*; what can it be? God said, The day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely *die*,—but the tree is gone—I cannot now die by eating of its fruit—but then, what assurance have I that I shall not die, perhaps a more dreadful death, in some other way?

Thus would Adam be left in darkness and in ignorance of how matters were to go with him, having no sure guide to go by and no sign of his Maker's presence. Thus was this tree unto him the knowledge, the testimony, the assurance of good.

But if he *eat* of the tree, then it would become unto him the knowledge of evil. This tree would then bear testimony *against* him, and would now appear more like a tree of Sinai than of Salem—not a tree of peace, nearness to God, and tranquillity, but a tree of tribulation, lamentation, mourning, and woe—the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

But as the next chapter will again bring this tree under notice, I may add no more here.

The gospel meaning of all this would perhaps be, by different Christians, taken in different ways. Were I to venture a word or two, it would be this; that the tree of knowledge of good and evil was a symbol of the law, and God and man by these *two* trees, the tree of life and the tree of knowledge of good and evil, dwelt together; that we have these two trees, as it were, in one in Christ Jesus, where God and man meet at *one table*, where God receiveth sinners, and *eateth with them*; that the Lord Jesus is both the tree of *supernatural* life, and the sign, the assurance of the favour and presence of God; that if Christ be taken away, *all* is taken away, and nothing would be left but the solitude and desolation of the lost.

But the Lord Jesus having put away the sin of his people can never become unto them the tree of the knowledge of evil; that is, not to their condemnation. He is for and to them the tree of the knowledge of life and good, all their needs being supplied by him.

But I leave the reader to trace out for himself the contrast between the original *law* dwelling together of God and man and the *gospel* dwelling together of God and man. In the one, sin wrought separation, but in the other no separation can take place. This gospel dwelling is the secret place, the holy of holies of the Most High, and those that dwell here shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty; they shall not see (fatal) evil any more.

Nor can they be tempted to seek higher or greater good than that which they have as heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, seeing God himself is the strength of their heart, and their portion for ever.

ONESIMUS.

IS THE WILL OF GOD DIVIDED AGAINST ITSELF?

MESSRS. EDITORS,—Being a constant reader of your valuable little work, the Gospel Ambassador, and finding the questions therein are answered in accordance with the word of God, I should feel obliged if you would give your thoughts on the following,—Is the revealed will of God in direct opposition to his secret will, or are they both one and the same?

The circumstance that led to this inquiry is as follows:—

Being without a minister for a few weeks there were some sermons read of Mr. P——t's, one of which treated on doing the will of God, from Hebrews x. 36; in which sermon Mr. P. divided the will of God in two parts,—the revealed and the secret; which he showed to be in opposition to each other, by the following:—"It was," says he, "the revealed will of God that Adam should not eat of the fruit of a certain tree; but it was his secret will that he should, to make way for the Saviour, &c. It was the revealed will of God that Abraham should offer up Isaac as a sacrifice; but it was the secret will of God that he should not, but that a ram should be the substitute. It was the revealed will of God that Saul should slay Agag; but it was his secret will that he should not. It was the revealed will of God that David should not commit adultery; but it was his secret will that he should, that Solomon might be born of Bathsheba. It was the revealed will of God that Peter should not deny Christ; but it was his secret will that he should, thereby to humble him, &c. It was the revealed will of God that the Jews should not put to death the Lord Jesus; but it was his secret will that he should; as it is written, 'Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God,' &c."

Is not this dividing the ever-blessed God against himself? It would appear by such doctrine as this, that to practise rebellion, and to commit adultery and murder, to fulfil the desires of the flesh,—and doing the will of God,—are one and the same thing. How can I harmonize this with the word of truth, which testifies of God's hatred of sin? A few thoughts on the above will greatly oblige,

A Lover of Truth,

Yours, in the bonds of the Gospel.

REMARKS ON THE PRECEDING.

THE judgments and decrees of God are a great deep, and are, in very many respects, to us incomprehensible.

We ought not to draw a wrong inference from the remarks in the sermon of the minister above alluded to. He no doubt *means* well; but we do not think his mode of treating a subject so deep is either clear or scriptural: because it makes conformity to the will of God utterly impossible. For, if we do his revealed will, we then oppose his secret will; and if we do his secret will, then we oppose his revealed will. For if Adam eat of the fruit, then he violates the revealed will of God; and if he do not, he then hinders the secret will of God. So that it really seems to lead to the conclusion that if Adam was blameable for violating the revealed will of God, he did at least do the secret will of God; so that if he is blamed for the one, he may

be commended for the other. We mean no disrespect when we say we think Mr. P. must have spoken *before* he had *thought* much upon this matter. We know it is a matter profound, and perhaps not reducible clearly to our understandings. It is a matter that cannot be treated with too much diffidence and reverence. We should have preferred Mr. P.'s *meaning* in the *form* following—supposing the following to be in any measure expressive of his meaning.

It was God's will of command that Adam should not eat of the tree; it was God's will of decree that, *if* he did eat thereof, he and his "whole posterity" should die: it was God's will of decree that, if Adam did not eat thereof, he should *not* die:—so that either way God's will of decree would have been unmoved. But the Lord knew that Adam would eat.

It was God's will of command that Abraham should offer Isaac for a burnt offering; but it was God's will of decree that Isaac should be offered only in figure.

It was God's will of command that Saul should slay Agag; it was God's will of decree that Saul should suffer the consequence of his disobedience.

It was God's will of command that David should not commit adultery; it was God's will of decree that the sword, in consequence, should not depart from David's house: it was also God's will of decree to show mercy to David, and so to overrule the circumstance as to make Bathsheba the mother of Solomon.

It was God's will of command that Peter should not deny Christ; it was God's will of decree that Peter's fall should not be (like the fall of Judas) to his destruction, but that he should be raised up again; learning, by his fall, a solemn lesson of his own weakness. Nor ought it to be forgotten, that the words *will* and *shall* are sometimes used as *convertible* terms; hence "thou *shalt* deny me" is the same in meaning as "thou *wilt* deny that thou knowest me."

Again: God's will of command was, "Thou shalt not kill;" God's will of decree was, if the Jews killed the Prince of life, he would send and slay those murderers, and burn up their city. They did what he commanded them not, and he has established his awful but righteous decree.

We are much disposed to Wickliff's translation of verses 27 and 28 of Acts iv.; that, instead of rendering it as our version has it—"For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done:"—instead of this rendering, let it run thus—"For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed *to do* whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to

be done, Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together."

The people were gathered together, not to do the will of God, but to do their own will; not to be guided by the counsel of God, but to carry out the counsel of the ungodly. But God was beforehand with them; he knew what they would do, and therefore governed the consequence of their conduct by his own decree, and thus made the works of their wicked hands subservient to his own counsels: for his counsel must stand, and he will do all his pleasure.

God's will of decree was that Christ should lay down his life for the redemption of sinners; but it does not follow that this *could not* be done without the wrath of man stepping in to put him to death. Are we obliged to believe that he *could not* endure the curse of the law, unless puny man puts forth his hand to put him to death? But for many reasons God suffered it so to be. But we do not think the time will ever arrive when men will be able to plead the secret will of God as their authority for putting Christ to death.

God's will of decree, then, was that his dear Son should die for his people; his will of decree, also, was the destruction of that nation who put him to death; but where is it said to be the will of God that men should hate, and blaspheme, and crucify his dear Son? Their conduct was *predicted*, because God foreknew it. We cannot, therefore, fall in with a doctrine which, as our correspondent says, divides the ever-blessed God against himself.

Mark how careful the apostle is to take the *foreknowledge* of God into account in the matter—"Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and *foreknowledge* of God, ye have taken, and by *wicked* hands have crucified and slain."

But let us look at it again: God (according to Mr. P.'s notion) *publicly* says, "Thou shalt not kill;" but *privately* wills (that is, wishes and desires) them to do what in public he forbids them to do. He publicly says, "No;" but *secretly* says, "Yes;"—in public attaches the heaviest penalties, and expresses himself as displeased: but in secret is glad from his very heart to see them doing his secret will.

Mr. P. certainly must have obtained this sad piece of divinity from some of the dreamy old prosaic fathers, or from some other dark place; for it certainly is nowhere found in the Bible. But still we are willing to believe his meaning to be much better than his words.

EDS.

LETTER FROM MR. CORBITT.

To my well-beloved brethren and sisters composing the churches of Christ, worshipping their three one God, at Biggleswade, in Bedfordshire, and at Oldham Street, Manchester, grace, mercy, and truth, be with you, and all that love the Lord in truth.

I promised, through the medium of the Ambassador, to furnish you with an account of the Lord's dealing with me in my removal from Biggleswade to Manchester, and my soul's exercises under the same, which I can now do with much pleasure, the Lord having testified the movement to be under His directions, by signs and wonders being wrought in the name of the holy child Jesus.

On the 19th of June, 1847, I received the first intimation of an invitation to Manchester, and on the 29th I made an engagement to supply for the three last Lord's days in August, and the first in September. After I had made this engagement I was brought into a sore soul conflict—first, by a consideration of my own inability, and I verily thought that I was now assuredly wading out of my depth, and should now make a full discovery of my weakness; secondly, from the thought of the truly excellent, very able, and experimental ministry of Wm. Gadsby; so weak, and foolish, and truly forgetful was I of who it was that made man's mouth, that I trembled like a leaf, and when I was informed that the hearers were a very crafty company of critics, and would catch at and make mischief of every mis-spoken word, however well meant; oh, how I wished I had never made the engagement, knowing, from the want of learning, I should make many blunders in grammar, and in my mind I called myself a thousand fools. By these things I saw myself held up to public contempt, and I found under those exercises no sweetness, firm confidence in the Lord, or any feeling access at the throne; oh, how I repented, and wished something might happen to me rather than I should go without the Lord's direction and presence! As I was sitting in this disconsolate and dissatisfied state I opened the Bible, and met with these words: Arise, therefore, and get thee down, and go with them, doubting nothing: for I have sent them. This discovered to me the workings of my distrustful heart, under the power of unbelief, and brought tears plentifully from my eyes and contrition into my heart, and I said, I will go in the name of the Lord, and make mention of his righteousness, and his only. I do not remember that I lost the savour of this until the time arrived and I got down to Manchester, when all my confidence was again gone; and oh, when I entered the meeting, which is

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large enough I suppose to hold somewhere about eight hundred people, with about one hundred and fifty persons scattered about, all of them looking as if they had lost their best friend, and all they possessed—this appeared to me a true picture of misery, and judging from my own feeling I was the most miserable of the lot; I went up into the pulpit, trembling, shaking, and wishing myself anywhere but there, blundered through the time, I cannot tell how, for I have not the most distant remembrance of the subject, neither do I believe it was one; this, indeed, mortified my pride more than a little, and as I returned I thought, Oh, if the Lord would but pardon my folly! and I said, I wish the people would send me home and suffer me to preach no more.

After dinner I left the company and retired to my bedroom, and falling upon my knees I confessed, begged pardon, entreated the Lord's interference, but no answer; on my rising from my knees, and taking my little companion, I opened upon these words: Ps. xxvii. 13, 14, I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord. This relieved my grief; hope sprang up, faith stretched out her wing, love whispered peace; my unbelief was gone in a moment, and I exclaimed in answer to those words, So had I, David. In this blessed frame of mind the Lord led me to the pulpit in the evening in faith, the devil led me there in the morning in unbelief; now I found that the blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow therewith, Prov. x. 22. My soul was now at large, the countenances of the people were changed, the Master was there, the water was turned into wine, the people drank by the way, and lifted up their heads, hearts, and voices to the Lord, in songs of thankful praise.

From this time the congregation began to increase, and my hopes and fears alternately rose and fell as I felt the presence of the Lord manifested, for I had lost all my native confidence, and truly found that without the Lord I could do nothing; and although the friends did all they could to comfort and encourage me, yet I could receive comfort from no such quarter, and I am most happy to say that, instead of finding the people as they had been represented to me, turbulent, austere, and reserved, I can truly say that, taking the generality of them, I never met with a more liberal-minded, open-hearted people in my life; my trouble and difficulty arose from myself, and I could not abide the thought of Manchester, and longed to return to my own little church, where I expected to end my days; but the Lord's thoughts are not our thoughts, is evident, nor his ways our ways. Having thus fulfilled my engagement I returned, and fully

intended never to receive another invitation to Manchester, but on the 18th of September I received an invitation to supply again during the month of November; this I presented to my church, who, in accordance with my wish, returned an answer that they could not comply with their request. During this time I made application to my friends for some alteration, which was not attended to, according to my mind; the consequence was, that at a church meeting I informed them that it was my intention, at no far distant period, to resign my pastoral charge over them; they appeared much surprised, and very sorry, and on the following Lord's day, not having been waited on by any of the authorities of the place, I publicly announced from the pulpit my intention, telling them at the same time they were at liberty to engage any persons as supplies, and I should consider myself at liberty to receive any engagement. I here quite expected that I should be waited on by the authorities, to see if the difficulties could be removed, but this was not done. About this time I received an unanimous invitation to take the charge of the church of Oldham Street, Manchester; this of course struck me with much surprise, as I had never intimated to them the probability of my being at liberty, much less willingness, to go to Manchester; to this I replied, that I could not, nor dare not do any such thing, but as I was thus mysteriously at liberty I would receive an invitation for a month, and, on November the 11th, I received and accepted an invitation for the three last Lord's days in December, and the first in January. Now I began most seriously to feel my position, and the utmost necessity for the Lord to guide me in this intricate moment; oh, how my soul was tossed about lest I should take a wrong step! and the thought of going to Manchester gave me pain of mind, and could not be seriously thought of without tears; the thought of leaving my family scattered in the south, and my church apparently destitute, lay with no small weight on my mind, especially if I should move without the Lord's direction, when these words came with much force: Although my house be not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure, 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. And this Scripture followed me powerfully: And hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation, Acts xvii. 25. But I do not like Manchester. Lord, to be confined amongst that smoke, I had much rather have a little farm to obtain my living, and preach to a few people gratuitously. During this time my friends at Biggleswade were standing quite still, and the friends at Manchester were carrying out their free trade spirit to the full; I had at one time seven letters in the house, all unanswered, from different parties connected with the chapel, all expressing the most

ardent desire for my services, assuring me that the cause had taken a turn for the better from the first of my preaching, and the prayer meetings were much better attended, and a real spirit of prayer prevailed amongst the people on my behalf at this time. I felt as if it must be all flattery; my services seemed to me so insignificant, and the undertaking of the care of that church appeared to crush me down, and I felt as if I could not go, when the Lord graciously introduced this scripture to me: Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites; have not I sent thee? Judges vi. 14. This showed me that the battle strength or skill was not mine; still, though my judgment saw clearly the Lord's hand, yet my heart rebelled, and said, Send by whom ye will send; here I was left to reason a little while again, and I thought, What a foolish thing I am; I have evidence the Lord sent me here, by the abundant use he has made of me; I have peace and prosperity, what do you want more? you will go away and you will be brought into contention, strife, and adversity, and most likely in less than a year have to come back. No man can rightly enter into these conflicts of flesh and spirit, unless brought into them; here I sunk fathoms, and thought I would tell the friends at Biggleswade that if they would freely forgive me for disturbing their minds, I would stop with them; but the Lord reigneth, he soon put a stop to this by directing my attention to Deut. i. 8: And behold, I have set the land before thee: go in and possess the land. I now saw and began to reflect on the extent of usefulness which presented itself at Manchester, a good sized chapel, in the centre of a population of 350,000 souls, and but few that knew their right hand from their left in the things of God, and no settled ministry of decided truth amongst them; thus I saw the Lord might well say, the land was before me; thus I saw that I was not to stop in a village, or town, but to have a land to work in; but my unthankful heart, like Jonah's, wanted to go any way but the Lord's way, and I should have acted as bad as Jonah if I had been left to myself; here I cried, Take me where thou pleasest, or let me stay here, only let me have thy presence, and I will be willing to go anywhere; thus I cried unto the Lord, and thus he answered me: Ye have compassed this mountain long enough: turn ye northward, Deut. ii. 3. This struck my infidelity, like a dagger, and I kept praying, for I was very suspicious lest I should be deceived; then I prayed constantly that if the Lord hath not appointed me to settle in the north he would not suffer me to go, even to fulfil this engagement; lay me on a sick bed, or use some means or other to stop me if I was wrong; as I had been as distrustful as Moses, so like him I met rebuke; for a day or two before I started my wife and I

had been to take our farewell of one branch of the family, before we went for the month ; on our return the horse kicked the front of the gig out, and with great difficulty and danger we escaped. I thought of the angel meeting Moses by the way, and seeking to slay him, Gen iv. 24, and I was enabled to look at it as a rebuke for my infidelity, I could not look at it in any other light, the escape was so miraculous ; I was thus enabled to bless the Lord for his goodness to me. After this I rested quiet until the night before my intended journey, when I was surprised by a very particular dream, which I have seen partly fulfilled, but which I shall not relate here. At length the morning appeared that I was to take my journey, and my feelings, as I crossed the market hill, Biggleswade, cannot be expressed. My soul, overwhelmed with love for my Biggleswade friends, made me cry out, Unless thy presence go with me, carry me not up hence. And this answer responded : My presence shall go with you, and I will give thee rest, Exod. xxxiii. 14.

I arrived at Manchester in safety, and preached on the Lord's day with some degree of liberty, and was received by the friends with kindness, and the Lord was very precious to my soul, and I followed my calling with some degree of pleasure ; but, notwithstanding all the kindness and entreaties of the people, I secretly hoped that I should get rid of the call honourably, and return to my friends, whom I knew would, with open hearts, receive me with joy. During this time I received a letter from one of the friends at Biggleswade, stating that he had been trying to ascertain the minds of the friends concerning me, and they all anxiously desired my return, but one said stand still ; to this I was compelled to return an indefinite answer, not having as yet heard the Master's voice in the matter so powerfully as I wanted ; and after I had fulfilled more than half my engagement I could not give an answer whether I could stop or not, but I felt more inclined to return, and I sat down one day to write a letter to some particular friends, with the intention to hold out some hopes of my returning to them, feeling assured that my services were much wanted amongst them, and thinking that my departure would be enough to sink them ; here I stood, as it were, between two, praying the Lord to give a perfect lot, when, to my surprise, this portion of Scripture came like thunder to my soul : Leave thy fatherless children, I will preserve them alive ; and let thy widows trust in me, Jer. xlix. 11. Here I learned that the lot is cast into the lap, but the whole disposal is of the Lord, Prov. xvi. 33. Oh, how my heart cried out that the Lord would remember Biggleswade ! but I could not, yea, I dare not make any more objections ; after my wife and I had eased the anguish of our souls, by giving vent to a flood of tears, we went direct to the

deacons, and I told them that the Lord had settled the matter, and that I would cast in my lot with them in the name of the Lord. This, my friends, is the way the Lord brought me to Manchester, where I pray his presence may be conspicuously continued to my soul, and through me be abundantly conveyed to his family.

The result will more abundantly prove the work to be of God: our congregation has continued to increase gradually; sittings are let to a larger amount than at any former period; nine persons came before the church on the 4th of February, and on Lord's day the 6th, they were admitted to the ordinance in the afternoon, five of them having been baptized in the morning, the other four had been baptized members of other churches, and I expect to see a larger number present themselves before the church, in the name of the Lord, next church meeting; three have already made application, and several more have intimated their intention.

JOHN CORBITT.

NOTHING TO PAY.

[The annexed narrative must speak for itself. It will be opposed by all but those who know the *plague of the heart*, and the *freeness, fulness, and preciousness of Jehovah's grace* as bestowed upon the *vilest of the vile*, and that *without money and without price*! Poor REID was indeed a trophy of grace—rich grace! The narrative is of very recent date. It is but a few days since the subject of it entered his eternal rest, there to sing, in infinitely higher and more glorious strains, the language which so pressed upon our heart and mind whilst reading the particulars with which our correspondent has favoured us:—

“GRACE taught my soul to pray,
And made my eyes o’erflow;
’Twas GRACE that kept me to this day,
And will not let me go.

“GRACE all the work shall crown
Through everlasting days;
It lies in heaven the topmost stone,
And well deserves the praise.”—En.]

ONE day, when going my usual round of visiting, I called to leave some relief with a poor woman recovering from a severe illness. On leaving, she asked me very entreatingly to call at the next cottage, upon a family lately come into the parish, and in great distress. The man, she said, was far gone in decline, but so resolute and bearish in his language and behaviour that the neighbours were afraid to go near him. The woman accompanied me to the house, and left me at the door, which was opened by a timid and rather interesting-looking woman. “Is it your husband who is ill?” I asked. “Yes,” she said, in a low voice, keeping the door half-closed as she spoke; “and

very ill indeed he is." "Can I see him?" I asked. "Yes—no—I can't say just this minute," replied the poor wife, and her lips quivered while she spoke, and a flush of fear lest she had offended me rose in her cheek. "Well, never mind," I said, "another day he may be able to see me, but in health or sickness there is no time like the present." So saying, I moved away from the door. With an unexpected energy of look and tone, the poor woman answered, "That's true," and, opening the door at once, bade me follow her. Seated beside the fire was her husband, and awfully ill he looked. He appeared to be about the middle size, with a very intelligent countenance, but a very bad expression; his piercing eye seemed to look me through as I entered, and ask, "What brings you here?" "Well," I said, "my friend, I heard you were ill, and I called to see you." He nodded his head, and looked at the fire. "You appear to be very ill," I continued; "and I thought you might like to be read to, or have a tract lent you, as you must now be much alone." "No," he replied sternly, "I want neither; I can read for myself. I have a good understanding to know the meaning of what I read; and, as to the tracts, I know quite as much as they can tell me. I am not an ignorant man." "Well," I said, "the first lesson learnt in the school of Christ teaches a man he is a fool." "Then, thank God, I'm no fool for all that," he replied. "I have been blessed with a good understanding, and a little education, and I have turned both to good account." I soon saw this sort of skirmishing with a man of his mind was only trifling with time, so I turned the conversation by asking had he been long ill? "About six months," he replied, sulkily. "In following my trade I met with an accident, fell into a well, took cold, and have been ill ever since." "Do you think you'll recover?" I asked. "God knows," he answered, "how can I tell that?" "Well, in the event of your present illness ending in death," I said, "what do you think of the state of your soul, and what hope have you beyond the grave?" "Oh, as to my soul," replied the man, carelessly, "that is well enough. I try all I can, and God is merciful." "And are you dying upon that dependence?" said I; "for if so, what need had the Lord Jesus Christ to suffer, bleed, and die, if you can get to heaven without him?" "I believe in Christ," he retorted, in the same careless tone. "I believe he came to save sinners." "All sinners?" I asked. "Yes, all sinners." "Well then, why are not all sinners saved?" I inquired; "for the Bible tells us, 'The wicked shall be cast into hell, and all nations that forget God.' It is clear, then, from Scripture, He is not the Saviour of all sinners." "No," said the sick man; "not all sinners, I suppose, but only those that try for it." "Try for it," I repeated; "what do you

mean by trying for it?" "Why, I mean, to be sure," said the man, "those that do the best they can, and believe in God, and repent of their former sins; and I am trying for it." There was a pause for a minute, and I broke it by saying, "Then the sooner you let it alone the better, for 'tis all lost labour." An involuntary start was all the answer I got. I waited a second or two, and then said, "The Bible tells us, 'A man can receive nothing except it be given him from heaven,' and till God begin with you all your trying will go for nothing." "And do you mean to tell me my trying is of no use?" said the sick man, with a tone and look of defiance. "I do," I said; "I deliberately say, on the warrant of God's word, 'Except you are born again you cannot enter the kingdom of God;' and you can have no more to say to your spiritual birth than you had to say to your natural birth. It must be God's work from first to last." "And you mean to say a man *can't* try?" he inquired in a taunting tone. "Yes," I replied, "I mean what I say, God must be beforehand with the sinner in everything. He is beforehand in the choice of the sinner in eternity; He is beforehand in his creation in time; and He is beforehand in his new creation in grace. It is all God's work from first to last to save a sinner from hell." "Very likely," replied the man, "but I suppose he can pray for it." "No, nor that either," I said; "you can't pray till you are born again; you may say words, but you cannot pray; the babe must be born before it can cry." "Then do you mean to tell me I am to leave off my prayers?" asked the man. "Just as you like," I answered. "If you think there is any merit in your prayers the sooner you leave them off the better, as far as that goes. The prayer of the unconverted is like the bow I get from the poor of the parish; it is a mark of respect, and a token of superiority; and as such it finds its reward; as such, it is an acknowledgment of God from his creatures, and on a par with the cry of the raven, and the roar of the wolf, which God recognizes in his own way, but *this* is not prayer. True prayer must be dropped into the soul by God, and never comes but from a renewed heart." "Then," said the man, "what is the meaning of these words, 'Ask, and it shall be given you?'" "Christ spake these words to his disciples, not to the unconverted," I replied; "and if you should ever be made a disciple you will find He says them to you." "Well," rejoined the sick man, in a taunting tone, "if people are not to be saved for trying or praying, will you just tell us how they are to be saved?" "It is God's work from first to last," I replied. "He loves his people—chooses them—dies for them in the person of his Son—renews them by the Holy Ghost—cuts them down in their feelings—roots up all their fancied religion—reveals a precious Christ to their heart—keeps them to

the end—and lands them in glory.” “And that’s your way,” said the man. “Well, I would rather have my own religion than *that*.” “Yes,” I replied, “and you will keep it too, unless God begin a work in you. *Nothing to pay*, is the marrow of the gospel; but proud man won’t have it so; he wants to pay something towards his salvation by his tryings and his prayers; but when God the Spirit enters the soul, He shows the sinner he is lost and ruined, and has *nothing to pay*. He brings sin to sight—he shows him what God is—what His law requires, and this terrifies—alarms; but ‘there is hope of a tree if it be cut down;’ and a soul brought here by God shall be made to see something more in *nothing to pay*, for that Jesus has paid all, done all, and left the sinner *nothing to pay*.” “Well, I’ll try for all that,” said the man doggedly. “I call your way cruel.” “You’re not the first that has said so,” I replied; “but let us compare the two ways, and let us just see which is cruel. You believe you were born a sinner?” A surly sort of a grunt I took for yes, and proceeded. “Well, now, I come to you and say you are a sinner, but you must repent, believe, pray, love God, keep His law, and then He will change your heart, and take you to heaven. Or, suppose I come to you and say, you are a sinner—dead in trespasses and sin, but God can raise you to life—give you a new heart—sprinkle the blood of Jesus upon your conscience—pardon your sin, and take you to glory; and, if you are loved and chosen of God, all this *must* and *shall* be done for you. Now which of those ways has most mercy in it for a poor sinner?” “Both cruel alike,” replied the man, bitterly; “and the best thing for me to do, by your account, is to make up my mind to be damned.” “Well,” said I, “God only knows the end from the beginning; and unless you are born again you must perish; for ‘nothing can enter the kingdom of heaven that defileth, worketh abomination, or maketh a lie.’ You are a sinner by nature and practice, and as such you cannot dwell with God.” “I know that as well as you,” he answered; “but do you mean to say Christ Jesus does not save sinners?” “Christ Jesus came to do the will of God,” I replied; “He says, ‘I came down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of Him that sent me; and this is the Father’s will which hath sent me, that of all which He hath given me, I should lose nothing.’ The work of Jesus was to save his people from their sins. All sinners are not Christ’s people, or they would be saved from their sins; but the sinners whom Jesus saves are loved of God, and given Him by God, and He does the will of God in saving them; and then the Spirit makes them sensible of their state as sinners, and this brings them to cry to God for mercy and pardon out of a broken, bleeding heart. But now (continued I, as I rose to go) what if

God's design in afflicting your poor body were to reveal all this to your soul, and so prove you to be one of those precious sinners loved by God, and given to Christ before all worlds; what, if you should be made to see all your tryings and prayers were only 'filthy rags'—fuel fit for burning; what, if God were to cut you down in your feelings and hopes, and tear away all your rotten props, and then display a bleeding, dying Christ to your wondering eyes, and say to you,

‘ This heart I bought with blood,
This heart it shall be mine ;’

and then make you happier than your tongue could tell in the enjoyment of a free salvation ?” I waited for a response ; there was none, except the answer in my own soul that it was precious truth, whether he ever were made to feel it or not. Just as I had my hand on the lock of the door to depart, he looked over his shoulder and said, “ You may leave us one of your tracts if you like.” “ With pleasure,” I replied, “ and perhaps another day I may look in.”

After a few days I called again. “ Well, Reid,” said I, “ how have you been since I saw you last ?” “ Bad,” was his only reply. “ How have you felt in your mind ?” “ I have my own thoughts,” he answered gruffly, “ but I don't choose to be questioned.” “ To your own Master you stand or fall,” said I; “ but you seem very ill—time flies—eternity is at hand—your must soon appear before God, and what is to become of your never-dying soul ?” “ Damned,” he answered sternly. “ May God fasten that upon your heart as a nail in a sure place,” I said ; “ for so sure as He does, He will draw out the nail, and drop in its stead the blood of the Lamb.” The man looked gloomy. “ Well,” said he, “ I have thought of all you said to me, and it seems to me to mean this : One man may try all he can, and if he is not chosen he cannot be saved ; and another man may not try at all, and yet if he is chosen he shall be saved.” “ Just so,” said I, “ you are quite right. I would only add this to what you have said, all the trying that comes from sinful man will go for nothing, certainly ; but those who are chosen of God will be taught by God to try rightly, for Jesus says, ‘ All that the Father hath given me *shall come to me*, and him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out.’ When God begins with a sinner, a sinner will begin with God, and never before.” I saw Reid was greatly vexed I did not disapprove of his statement. “ Well,” he replied angrily, “ I call that cruel. A man to do all he can, and get nothing—another never move a peg and get everything ; as if I'd believe that.” “ It is quite impossible to believe it savingly,” I replied, “ unless God reveal it to you.” Reid looked as if he did not hear me, but was pursuing his own train of thought. “ And now,”

said he, "how can God be just in punishing sinners that can't help it?" "Let God answer that," I replied; and taking up his Testament that lay on the table, I opened at the 9th of Romans, and read from verse 13 to 20—the very words he almost literally uttered. "Thou wilt say then with me, Why doth he yet find fault, for who hath resisted his will? Nay, but O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" The piercing eyes of Reid seemed to peer into the page, as if questioning whether I had read aright, or supplied the text for my own turn. "Now," said I, handing him the open book, "the Holy Ghost leaves it where you and I must, whether we like it or not." "And yet," said he, glancing at the text, as he laid the book on the table, "it's unreasonable. Make all of the same lump—choose some, and damn the rest." "Yes," replied I, "most unreasonable; for the Bible says, 'The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned.' Man's reason, like all his other powers, is fallen and corrupt, and so he is incapable of judging the things of God; he puts bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter; darkness for light, and light for darkness. Nor is this the only truth beyond and contrary to man's reason; there are many more quite as unreasonable, but none hit so hard or come so home as this. It pushes proud man into a corner he cannot get out of; it stops all boasting; it cuts down all human effort; it says you are in or out, and it puts all the power in God alone. Hence fallen man hates this doctrine, and the devil, who lost heaven because he had no interest in it, hates it with a deadly hate, and stirs up the wrath of sinners against it." "Did you ever hate it, then?" asked Reid, with somewhat of softened inquisitiveness. "When dead in sin I never troubled about it," I answered. "When living in a formal state of profession I believed it to mean the Jews, chosen by God as a nation. When a little serious about my soul, I supposed people were chosen for good works God foresaw they would do; but when brought to this point, *nothing to pay*, I began to see salvation must be all of grace, and that my polluted hands could take no part in the work. At length, by the application of this Scripture, 'Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated,' the Lord slew my enmity—brought me as a willing captive to bow to his truth, and not very long after gave me a precious experience that I had an interest in his electing love." "Well, now," said Reid, as if gathering strength by silence, "is there not a great deal in the Bible that looks as if we could do something?" "No," I replied, "God is of one mind, and who can turn Him?" There is much in the Scriptures that even God's people

can neither explain or understand, but there is nothing that, rightly understood, contradicts this truth—*God first in everything*. Much that in the Old Testament seems to favour your thought was addressed to the Jews as a nation, whom God placed in the midst of an idolatrous world to keep up the knowledge and worship of the one true God, and He promised if they would outwardly honour Him He would honour them ; but God's chosen people among the Jews were saved by grace—free favour alone ;” and as I spoke, I marked in his Bible, the 17th chapter of the 2nd Book of Kings, and the 54th of Isaiah. “ Well, now,” said Reid, “ if all the trying in the Old Testament belongs to the Jews, what do you make of the trying in the New ? ” “ Why,” I replied, “ the trying in the New Testament is the proof and evidence that God has been first. Just as the tender blade out of the ground tells you the sower has gone before.” “ Well,” said Reid, thoughtfully, “ trying can't hurt anybody.” “ What good will it do you ? ” I asked, “ since the Bible tells us our righteousnesses are only filthy rags ? ” He made no answer. “ Reid,” I said, “ that viper will be crushed if ever Jesus is revealed to your soul ; and instead of any hope that your tryings will help your salvation, you will cry out, *I am vile*, and feel your *best* deeds would damn you, leave alone your *worst*.” “ Well,” said Reid, “ I have been a sinner—God knows I have ;” and he threw his head against the high back of his chair, and rolled it slowly from side to side ; “ but you say that goes for nothing too, unless I am chosen.” “ Quite true,” I replied ; “ I am not afraid of God's truth, but if ever you are made to feel your sins, and love Jesus, these will be sweet signs that you *are* chosen. ‘ No man can come to me (said Jesus) except the Father draw him ;’ so if you are drawn it is because God has been beforehand with you.”

About ten days from this visit I saw Reid again. He received me gloomily. “ Are you any better ? ” I asked. “ No,” he replied, “ worse—every way worse—body and soul.” “ And what do you think about your soul ? ” “ Think ? ” said he, with a look of rugged anguish, “ why there's a load here that is crushing me—killing me ;” and he struck his breast vehemently as he spoke. “ Well,” said I, “ there is hope of a tree if it be cut down.” “ No,” answered he ; “ there is no hope for me—I am dead—quite dead.” “ Dead people don't feel,” I rejoined. “ No, nor I don't feel,” said he, quickly. “ When a man has death and hell staring him in the face, and nothing but sin to look at, 'tis no wonder he should feel ; but I'm hardened.” “ Do you pray ? ” I asked. “ No,” he replied ; “ I groan sometimes, but it isn't in prayer.” Now, that very day before I had seen him these words were confirmed by his next-door neighbour, who told me for more than a week she and her hus-

band could get no sleep, because Reid would sit up all night praying and groaning. Reid's wife also subsequently testified to the same; as often he would arouse her and his children in the middle of the night, and say, "I see the flames of hell—I smell the fire of the pit. Oh, my burden! my burden! where shall I lay it? I am lost! I am damned! Let us all get up and pray;" and his timid wife and terrified children, amidst darkness and cold, would have to fall on their knees at his command, while hour after hour he groaned out bitter cries to God for mercy. "Well, now, Reid," said I, "what if God should be teaching this first solemn lesson, *nothing to pay*?" "Oh," he replied hastily, "I am not going to deceive myself with that, good as it is." "I neither mean to deceive you or persuade you," I answered; "for if lifting up my finger would show you your interest in Christ, and give you peace, I would not do it. *That* is the Holy Ghost's work, and all human persuasion is like water spilt upon the ground. I can only say, if those feelings you describe are from God, they will end to your unspeakable joy; if not, they will expire in darkness." I added a few words upon the fulness and freeness of God's great salvation—the completeness of Christ's finished work—and the blessedness that all the blood-bought family should come assuredly to taste the sweets of it here in grace, and hereafter in glory.

In about three weeks from this time I saw Reid again; but how can words describe the change that had taken place in him? On my entering, he looked at me with solemn emotion, and said, "I have seen the Lord; my sins are pardoned; my burden is gone." I stood amazed, as though I had never believed the extent of all I had ever said to him. He then entered into the detail of the Lord's gracious discovery of Himself to his soul, and I soon found our office was changed; he was now the teacher—I was the learner. The Lord seemed to have ravished his heart with love, and melted every doctrine into rich unctuous experience, while tears of self-loathing fell on a free pardon.

At about an interval of ten days I saw Reid again. It was a solemn season. He said, "You never told me of half the bliss and joy I feel. Did you ever feel as I do? Did any one out of heaven ever enjoy a precious Christ as I do? Was ever a rebel sinner favoured as I am? I can neither eat, drink, or sleep—I am as afraid of my love as if it was a bird that a wink would drive away. I am filled with the Spirit; I am drunk with this new wine. My poor wife thinks me mad, and well she may. I am beside myself with joy upon times. Nothing troubles me now. There's the infant a dying;* trouble all

* The infant died that same week.

around me; but I don't give it a thought. Do you know (he continued) my wife's sister sent me some wine, but I won't taste a drop of it, lest they should say 'twas their wine made me happy; 'tis up there on the shelf, and there it may stay for me. Oh that everlasting love of God—that precious blood of the Lamb! That's the wine that cheers my heart."

In this frame he continued for weeks, and up half his nights, reading, praying, and praising God. One day he said to me, "My poor wife is as dead as the table. She is a good wife and mother, but she knows not the Lord." "Do you talk to her about her soul?" I asked. "Yes," he replied: "but I see myself over again in her, for she hates God's truth as I did; and half the Christians that come in to see me don't understand me, and when I tell them what God has done for me, and how I fought against him, they look at me as if I was mad." After some weeks I perceived his joys gradually abated; and, in answer to my inquiries how he was, he used to answer, "Very changeable, but God is just the same."

About six months from my first visit Reid revived wonderfully—was able to get to a place of worship—conduct family prayer, morning and evening, and work a little in his garden. An opportunity offering of a more comfortable cottage for his family, he removed into it about this time. "Well, Reid," said I, on entering his new habitation, "I am truly glad to see you in so nice a little place. This is a great change for the better." He looked up from under his shaggy eyebrows, and said, "Yes, 'tis well enough." The tone of voice was not one of satisfaction, and a momentary thought of vexation gleamed across my mind, at his want of gratitude. "Well," I said, rather reproachfully, "I did think you would have been pleased to get into such a nice place as this." He looked full at me for a minute, and then said, "This cot will never be to me what the other was—that was a heavenly house—a glorious house; there Jesus found me in my sins; there he pardoned me; there he often talked with me. No other house will ever be to me what that house was." His voice faltered as he spoke, and he dashed away a tear that dimmed his eye. I talked a little of the preciousness of an Immanuel, *God with us*—a Jesus ever the same. "Yes," said he, "God can do much more for me here, but what I felt there can't be done twice."

Reid's health began again to give way, and his sufferings became most acute. Once I visited him under a violent attack of pain. I inquired how it was within. "Why," said he, "I have no more religion in me than the fender these last two days; my religion is all gone." "Well," I answered, "you are to die with *nothing to pay*; and to the last sand you must learn you have nothing but grace to glory in." "Yes," he rejoined,

"that's true, I have nothing to pay; I am a poor ruined sinner to-day in myself; all I have is from Jesus. But I have been thinking all this morning, 'tis no cheat what I have felt; for now I am left in my feelings, if I was left of God too, Satan would soon overrun my soul, and be too mighty for a fleshly religion." "Well," said I, "if your religion is gone as to happy experience, Jesus says, 'I will never leave thee nor forsake thee—I am with you always, even to the end.' " This seemed to cheer him.

A few days after this interview I sent to know how he was. He said to the messenger with great solemnity, "When a man comes to die with his sins all pardoned, 'tis no matter then that he can neither read, nor think, nor talk. Jesus has done all, and left me nothing to do." In a few days I saw him again. His agonies were indescribable. He said, "These two dark days I wanted my wife to kill me, and put me out of my misery; but I am willing to wait the Lord's time now." "How do you feel in your mind?" I asked. "Happy as the child," was his emphatic whisper, and a little smile illumined his rugged countenance as he spoke. The next day I called; Reid was asleep, and the wife out. The eldest child, a girl about twelve years old, was sitting sewing in the kitchen. From her I learnt her father had passed an awful night of pain. They had all sat up with him. I asked her, "Did he talk at all?" "No," she replied simply; "he seldom says anything now, but 'I am happy.'" Once, and but once more, I saw Reid. He was in bed. When I entered he smiled faintly, and tossing off the bedclothes hastily, thrust out his bony hand and grasped mine. "I have been lying on the brink of the grave since I saw you last," he said; "but I don't dread it. I long to roll in and be at rest; then I shall be with the Lord. Ah," he continued with affectionate earnestness, while tears of love glistened in his eyes, "I shall see Him for ever who was revealed to me in that house I was so loth to leave; no wonder I loved every stone of it; but I shall soon be above; I shall soon see him as he is. Oh, what grace it was that enlightened my eyes!" Thus he continued for some time, uttering many precious truths that refreshed my heart to hear. The Sunday evening after this he departed. During the day, as the neighbours dropped in, he shook hands with each and all, and said deliberately and cheerfully, "Good bye, I am going to heaven;" and to his wife many times, he said, "Don't trouble—I'm going to Jesus." An hour before his death he said to her in a whisper, "Take care of yourself and our dear children. You have been a good wife. God bless you." These were the last words audible.

I doubt not readers will be found who may denounce my share in these conversations as *unguarded*, *injudicious*, and

dangerous. Let results speak, and let God's people take encouragement therefrom to tell all they know, whether men will hear or forbear, and leave the God who *gave* the truth to guard it.*

ANSWER TO THOMAS.

OUR correspondent "Thomas" has sent to us another epistle upon Hebrews vi.; this epistle, including the post-script, consisting of *eighteen* pages, where and when would the controversy cease? and especially as "Thomas" (we do not say wilfully, no!) has broken so violently through the rules of language, that he has placed himself in such a position as to make the text speak his sentiments, whether it will or not.

The reader is aware that our correspondent contends that the enlightened professors, spoken of in Heb. vi., are not mere nominal professors, who may become apostates, but *real Christians*, who can never fall away.

We have space to give only the substance of the same, and a word of reply to each part, after just reminding our correspondent that the absurdities he speaks of are of his own making; for the apostle often changes position of person, (speaking of the *same* persons sometimes in the second, sometimes in the third person, as the nature of his subject may require). And as to babes living upon food *digested* for them, certainly is a very "curious absurdity;" such a notion is as false in divinity, as it is impossible in nature. Babes must digest their own food, or it will do them no useful service.

"But that which beareth thorns and briers *is* rejected."

Our correspondent reminds us that the word *is*, in the above, is in *italics*, and may be omitted. He then makes it read thus: But that which beareth thorns and briers rejected. "Thomas" then endeavours to show, that this thorny ground means *not* those who were enlightened, &c., but characters altogether averse to the gospel.

But this alteration of the apostle's language is altogether gratuitous, arbitrary, and violent; it turns the singular into the plural, and the verb passive into a verb active. *That*, namely, that ground, is changed into *those* ground; for though the word ground be not expressed, it is undeniably implied—that, namely, that ground which beareth thorns and briers *undergoes* rejection, is rejected; but our correspondent makes this ground the *actor*, instead of the *acted* upon.

The apostle, in strict accordance with grammar and common

• Extract from the February Number of the Gospel Magazine.

sense, makes the ground not the actor, but the acted upon; and places his nouns and verbs in perfect harmony therewith: but "Thomas" takes leave, in this, both of rule and reason. We must, therefore, leave the apostle's language as we find it.

There are, no doubt, some instances where the omission of the italics may be made with advantage.

Again, we said in our last number, that it is not on the ground of the doctrine of final perseverance that the apostle was persuaded better things of these Hebrew Christians, but on the ground of their being *real* Christians; but "Thomas" says, "he should like to know the difference."

Well, "Thomas," we will show you the difference, by simply asking you a question; and it is this, Is not the *doctrine* of the final perseverance of saints *one* thing, and *your* personal interest therein another? Can we be persuaded that, because all real Christians shall endure to the end, *you* will never apostatize? The *doctrine* of final perseverance will remain a truth whether *you* are a real Christian, or whether you are not. For us to be persuaded of the final perseverance of the saints is *one* thing, and to be persuaded that *you* are one of these is another. It is then on the ground of the personal *reality* of your religion that we could be persuaded better things of *you*. Do you not now see that the doctrine of the truth is *one* thing, and the *identity* of persons interested in it is another?

"The apostle, our correspondent says, nowhere uses the term apostates."

True, he does not use this term in Heb. vi., nor is it used in the English version in the New Testament, but in the original it occurs in Acts xxi. 21, and again 2 Thess. ii. 3.

"All the enmity," says "Thomas," "the carnal mind can muster will never shame Christ."

Certainly not: nor can all the powers, or any of the powers of the adversary literally tread the Son of God under foot. Yet in chapter the tenth we learn that apostates, who had been enlightened, had a knowledge of the truth, became enemies to that truth, trod under foot—not literally, but relatively—the Son of God, and counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing; and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace. Such characters openly despised Christ, crucified him afresh; so that Christ became dead to them, and they to him: a separation took place. Such were bastard branches; they abode not in him, they were alive to Christ, *not truly* or vitally, but only by light without life; they were enlightened, they had a knowledge of the truth, but had neither the real *life* nor the *true* love of the truth. The union between them and Christ was not an inseparable union; and, therefore, they are in reality but thorny ground, which the end

of their profession *proves*; and thus it may be in Sodom or Egypt, or in both, that our Lord has been and may be *relatively* crucified. This crucifying Christ afresh is, in chapter the tenth, called sinning *wilfully*; therefore the precise words, "crucifying him afresh," not being used elsewhere descriptive of the conduct of apostates, is a matter of but little importance if the *same thing* be maintained elsewhere, as it clearly is, in chapter the tenth, and in the word, "Forasmuch as ye did it unto the least of these my brethren, ye did it unto me." And again, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?"

Our correspondent holds the notion, that the apostle is arguing, in Heb. vi., in favour of the doctrine of final perseverance; and that if *real* Christians should fall away, it would put Christ to shame, in not having completed his mediatorial work on their behalf.

Now we really believe the apostle had no such thought in his mind; for if he had, would he not, instead of saying "They crucify afresh unto themselves the Son of God," instead of saying this, would he not have rather said that "Christ must be again put to grief for them?" which would be very different from saying, "they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh;" and, not content with crucifying to themselves, not content to be dead to him, and that his name and truth should be dead to them; not content with this, they go on to tread the Son of God under foot, and hold him up to public contempt; or, as the apostle words it, "put him to an open shame:" so that it is evident that the repentance by which these apostates came into a profession was the repentance not of regeneration, but merely of reformation; and stony ground, thorny ground enlightenment followed, with a temporary joy and delight in religion. But even to this repentance they cannot again be renewed. The word of God once had a power with them, but now they are hardened fatally against it; going from bad to worse.

Our correspondent, the reader will bear in mind, contends that the enlightened professors, spoken of in Heb. vi., are real children of God. And he says, that crucifying to themselves the Son of God afresh, brings before us that dear truth, that *vital union of the church to him*.

Well, we must confess that it brings before us a very different matter. It brings before us not the union of the church to the Saviour, but the separation of the stony ground hearers from him, their conduct towards him, and the dreadful judgment that awaits them.

Our correspondent has laboured hard to maintain his ground; but we hope he may be led to see that his position is utterly untenable, that no process of reasoning can turn these enlightened professors into real Christians.

We will close by just comparing our own view of this Heb. vi., and that of our correspondent, with the language of the apostle, and leave the reader to judge for himself.

Correspondent.—It is impossible for *real Christians*, if they shall fall away, to renew them again to repentance, seeing they (*real Christians*) crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and (*real Christians*) put him to an open shame.

Eds.—It is impossible for *merely enlightened professors*, if they shall fall away, to renew them again to repentance; seeing *apostates* crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and *apostates* put him to an open shame.

Now let us see how this scripture, in order to agree with the sentiment of our correspondent, *ought* to read.

“For it is impossible for you, of whom I am persuaded better things, things that accompany salvation, for it is impossible for these to fall away; they would thereby prove the work of Christ to be deficient, and so make him ashamed that he began to build, and was not able to finish; and that, therefore, he must be again crucified for them.”

The above paragraph expresses, we believe, fairly the meaning of our correspondent; but does the language of the apostle authorize such a meaning? We think not: for the apostle does not say either that it is impossible for the characters of whom he is speaking to fall away, or that they *would* crucify the Son of God afresh. We repeat it: he does not say this; but speaks first, in a *conditional*, and then in a *positive* form. *If* they shall fall away. Here is the conditional, if they shall fall away; then comes the positive, seeing they (do) crucify to themselves afresh the Son of God, and put him to an open shame.

Now, if our correspondent were right, then the *meaning* of the apostle would have *unavoidably* bound him down to the subjunctive mood all through the sixth verse; but he leaves the subjunctive, and rises into the positive. He does not say, If they shall fall away they *will* or *would* crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh and put him to an open shame. Yet, if our correspondent were right, this is the way in which the apostle's meaning must have governed his language.

The meaning of the apostle appears to be this; “Seeing there are some who tread under foot the Son of God, some who were once enlightened, but are now turned away from the light, and now despise the Son of God—so among you there are some who are enlightened, and are partakers, as king Saul was, of the Holy Ghost—and, like the stony ground hearers, have tasted the good word of God, and the heavenly gift—and, like Herod, affected by the powers of the world to come, so as to do many things gladly; and these having no real life in them, no incorruptible seed in them, if these should fall away no reproof or

remonstrance can renew them again, seeing their fall is into deadly enmity against Christ; such enmity, that they set themselves to work to crucify Christ afresh, and would spare not the life of a John the Baptist, if he stood in their way, or impeded them in their delights. For the earth that drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for those by whom it is dressed, receiveth *blessing* from God: but these apostates, this ground which beareth thorns and briers is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned. But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak.”—Eds.

MARTIN LUTHER'S OPINION OF FREE WILL.

“*Al*, Lord God!” saith Luther, “why should we boast of our free will, as if it were able to do anything in divine and spiritual matters, were they never so small? For when we consider what horrible miseries the devil hath brought upon us through sin, (which are innumerable and monstrous,) then we might shame ourselves to death. For first, free will did lead us into original sin, and brought death upon us; afterwards, upon sin followed, not only death, but all manner of mischiefs, as we daily find in the world, such as murder, lying, deceiving, stealing, and other evils, insomuch that no man is in safety the twinkling of an eye, neither in body nor goods, which always do hover and stand in danger.

“And beside these evils there is yet a greater, (as is noted in the Gospel,) namely, that people are possessed of the devil, who maketh them mad and raging, so that, by reason of sin, the generation of mankind is nothing else but a stinking and filthy place, and habitation of devils. For there lieth on our necks everlasting death, and God’s wrath. Moreover, we are never in quiet, but are plagued here on earth, both in body and soul. Now what goodness can such a spoiled and poisoned creature think, much less perform, that might be pleasing to God, in divine and spiritual matters, which concern the salvation of our souls?

“In temporal things, which pertain to body and wealth, and to this life, as to govern land and people, to rule in housekeeping, &c., free will may do something that hath a shew and respect before men; but everything that proceedeth not out of faith is sin, saith St. Paul.

“We know not rightly what we became after the fall of our first parents—what from our mothers we have brought with us. For we have brought altogether a confounded, a spoiled, and a poisoned nature, both in body and soul; and throughout the whole of man is nothing that is good, as the scripture saith.

“And this is by absolute opinion, he that will maintain and defend man’s free will, that it is able to do or work anything in spiritual causes, (be they never so small,) the same hath denied Christ. This I have always maintained in my writings, especially in those which I wrote against Erasmus Roterodamus, (one of the principal learned men in the whole world,) and thereby will I remain, for I know it to be the truth; and though all the world should be against it, and otherwise conclude, yet the Divine Majesty must stand fast against the gates of hell.”

—*Extract from Luther’s Familiar Discourses.*

Two Waters, Jan. 15th, 1848.

H. H.

LETTER FROM ENOCH.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE GOSPEL AMBASSADOR.

MY DEAR SIR,—Grace, mercy, and peace be with you, and the whole Israel of God.

Being a constant reader of your monthly periodical, and for which I do desire to bless the Lord for enabling you, together with your numerous correspondents, to bring forward, from time to time, things not a few, new and old, out of the treasury of grace, so that your readers are thereby profited and encouraged in the fear of the Lord, and in the things of God and godliness.

I can say for myself that my own soul has been blest many times in reading the various pieces that have appeared. And for your encouragement I do hope that your appeal to your readers and to the friends of truth for their help and assistance will not be in vain in the Lord.

But my principal object in writing to you at the present time is this:—My attention was drawn to a paragraph on the cover of your Ambassador respecting a sermon preached at St. George’s Road Chapel, Manchester, on Lord’s day evening, January 23rd, which sermon you characterise as angry and untrue.

In this statement I can bear you out, being a hearer on that occasion. And I do assure you it gives me no little pain to have to bear any testimony against one whom I have every reason to believe to be a servant of Christ; and one whom I desire to esteem in the Lord for his work’s sake.

Therefore I do hope to write, not in anger, but in love, with a sincere desire to communicate truth, and not to imitate the example of rendering evil for evil, 1 Pet. iii. 9.

If I understood the preacher right, and I think I did, his principal aim appeared to be to make it appear that there were a people meeting at a certain chapel in the town who held

unscriptural doctrines, which said doctrines were the means of causing the so-called split at St. George's Road Chapel, and that Mr. W—— was the introducer of the said unscriptural doctrines, and its unflinching advocate.

He appeared to labour very hard, and with no small degree of seeming humility and affectation, that if by any means he could bring you into public contempt and hatred in the minds of the Lord's living family, and to stigmatise your character as a minister of the gospel, for consistency and uprightness; this appeared to be the life and spirit of his sermon. But I believe his victory to be only imaginary.

How grieved I was to hear statements made that have no foundation in truth, and that are only calculated to create strife, and to sow discord among brethren, things that the Lord hates, Prov. vi. 16—19.

Is not this giving offence that the ministry may be blamable? 2 Cor. vi. 3.

Therefore I do feel at the present time personally called upon to prove your entire innocence; and I do it with a solemn sense of that portion of holy writ on my mind: For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad, 2 Cor. v. 10. Although I have no desire, neither have I ability to write for publishing, yet were I called upon I could easily disprove the things laid to your charge.

The charge of members laying their heads together in the dark, without the knowledge of the deacons, too, is all imaginary and untrue.

They go on talking of a *split*, as though a division *really had taken place* at St. George's Road, whereas no member at St. George's Road had anything to do with *originating* the cause at Oldham Street.

I could not forbear writing you, being my only reasonable service at the present time, and out of love to you, and in gratitude for your past labours amongst the brethren here.

I could have wished that Mr. Kershaw had made himself acquainted with the true facts of the origin of the Oldham Street cause, for it is evident that he is in ignorance of the true facts of the case. But I would say to you, my dear sir, let none of these things move you; and I do pray that the Lord will enable you to press on through good report and evil report, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: he is Lord of all, Acts x. 36.

The Lord has blessed your labours in and around Manchester in an eminent degree, as hundreds at this day can testify. Many have been turned from darkness to light, and to a saving

knowledge of themselves as sinners, and have been built up in their most holy faith, which you have had testimony of in your several visits to the north, and not a few have you been an instrument of in the hands of the Lord in bringing out of the yea and nay system of the day, that are now decided for truth and an honour to the same, and as it respects the unscriptural doctrines charged upon you, and the friends at Oldham Street, they have never been so much as named amongst us as a church. Indeed, one of the charges I never heard of until it was publicly stated by Mr. Kershaw, from the pulpit, at St. George's Road. So much have we been concerned, that we did not know what we were charged with.

But notwithstanding all the opposition (and of this there has been no lack) to stop the progress of truth, we have a testimony that the word of the Lord is not bound, and that it is in vain for men to lay down a rule where men ought to worship; for if the Lord design to bless his word at Oldham Street, or anywhere else, who can stay his hand, or say, What doest thou?

" God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm."

When I reflect on the cause of God at Oldham Street I am constrained to say, What hath God wrought? He liveth and reigneth, the government of His church is in His own hands. Blessed be His precious name for ever and ever.

He hath not forgotten our many prayers to His throne; He hath heard and answered our petitions that He would send, by whom he would send, to break the bread of life, one that the people could hear to their soul's profit, that there might be a flowing together to the goodness of the Lord. He hath granted our request by sending us a Titus, in the person of Mr. John Corbitt, late of Biggleswade, by whom the Lord is bearing witness to his own truth, by signs following. And I am not without hope that many souls will have reason to bless God that Oldham Street was ever opened as a place of truth, when my poor head lies in the silent grave, and that future generations will have to record the goodness of the Lord there. Wishing you every new covenant blessing, yours to serve in Christ,

Feb. 7, 1848.

ENOCH.

A SERMON BY MR. J. KERSHAW, OF ROCHDALE,
*Preached at St. George's Road, Manchester, Lord's Day
Evening, Jan. 23rd, 1848.*

Acts xvii. 11: And searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so.

THE *professed* object of this sermon, by Mr. Kershaw, is to denounce certain doctrines, but the sermon *shows* that the read

object is to degrade Mr. Wells, to plunge a dagger into the heart of his reputation as a minister, and through this medium to deal out a deadly blow to the new cause in Manchester, but poor John has in both respects most beautifully missed his mark, and has done nothing but foam out his *own shame*.

His sermon we have now lying before us in manuscript ; it is not, that we are aware, in print, and we regret that our space will not allow us this month to give (which we hope to do next month) a full animadversion of John's delusive sermon ; a sermon expressive of the *heavy sighs, the expiring groans, and dying agonies of local self-importance*, which, if interpreted, would stand something like this : Oh that fellow Wells ; oh that he had never seen Manchester ; oh, whatever were we about to let him come ? Oh dear, what shall we do ? We were comfortable, and the banner over us was, *We are, and none else*. But oh, alas, now, now, oh, it grieves me to say it ; now, oh now, there is *another* cause in Manchester, and this other cause has for seven years struggled for life ; we made sure it would die, we prophesied its speedy dissolution, we laughed at its attempts to live, and if we could have killed that G—D F—W and two or three more, all would have been well. But, oh dear, that Wells has recommended a man to them, and I *fear* the Lord is with him, for the new cause is flourishing like the palm tree, and growing like a cedar in Lebanon ! Oh dear, we have but one remedy, and that is, to show that Wells split this cause, killed Mr. Gadsby, preached false doctrines, and deceived the people, and that the people who formed the new cause were just like Wells, and that none of them are so holy as we. Do not *think* this, friends, to be extravagant, for is it not known through all these parts of our dear country that to belong to, *or* to be of *our* party, is holiness itself ? In fact, all who follow not us are dead letter men. Ah, well, we must pity them a little, too, for they are weak enough to suppose that the tree of life is in the midst of the paradise of God, and that it is in the midst of the street of the city of God, and that they can get at it without coming to us. Ah, poor dead letter men !

We give the above that good John may have spoken out for him the undisguised language of his heart.

We will now, by way of introduction to our remarks for next month, just give a specimen of Mr. Kershaw's sermon :—

“ He forced himself to Bradford (Yorkshire) to a chapel there, and his conduct was such that they said he should not come there any more ; some time after this he sent a letter to Bradford, saying he wished to come ; it was a letter for answer to be returned immediately, so that he might be in time to put on the cover of the publications, to show that he had so many places to preach at, and what a great man he was. They put him off for a time as well as they could, and then refused. He then tells them he will go to Bradford, and form another cause ; accordingly, he went to Bradford, and laboured to effect a split ; he promised them he would send supplies if they

would take a room and begin ; he was a Yorkshireman who told me all the circumstances, and you know they are rather long-headed ; he said, They want to begin a new cause here, and want to drag me into it, but, says he, I sat down and counted the cost, and thought their supplies must be kept, and their expenses paid. There were some, however, that rallied round the man, but their conduct was very immoral."

Such is the statement of John Kershaw, now let us see what it is worth.

He (Mr. Wells) *forced* himself to Bradford, so says John Kershaw.

Now the truth of the matter is that in August, 1846, Mr. W. was invited to preach at Manchester, at a chapel taken for him in Green Street, Salford, three week evenings, Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday, omitting Tuesday, that being the evening at St. George's Road, and this evening was omitted to *avoid* drawing the St. George's Road people away from their own place.

A person, who knew Mr. W. was coming to Manchester, wrote to the cause at Bradford, for Mr. W. to preach there on the Tuesday evening, and it was settled for him so to do ; he went, and a friend, Mr. Currie, went with him, to Bradford. Mr. W. preached, and he and his friend returned the next day to Manchester.

So that his going to Bradford was not of his own seeking, and as to his conduct at Bradford, he can defy every mortal in Bradford, to charge him, justly, with one impropriety, in word or deed.

Mr. Kershaw says, Mr. W.'s conduct was such they would not have him ; but the parties, or rather party, who rejected him, assigned another reason ; namely, that Mr. W. had been an enemy to the late Mr. Gadsby, and this (as will hereafter, *D. V.*, be proved) like many more things, is utterly *false*.

Mr. W. having thus preached at Bradford, and not having the most remote idea of there being anything contrary to good feeling towards him, he, the next year, 1847, being invited to Manchester, and wishing to make the best of his time, wrote in a friendly way to the friends at Bradford to say that, as he was coming to Manchester, he would, if agreeable, pay them another visit ; but he received an answer from the deacon, saying he had better *not* come to Bradford, but assigning no reason why he should not come.

The question with Mr. W. now was, whether he was rejected merely by one or two influential parties, or by the church and people generally ; he soon ascertained that he was rejected, not by the church and people, but by one or two individuals, and chiefly by the beautiful deacon referred to in the subjoined letters.

Mr. W. then saw that the people were deprived of their liberty, and felt determined, if the Lord would open a way, to

go to Bradford: *the Lord did open a way*, and Mr. W. went to Bradford, and preached two evenings in a very commodious chapel, lent gratuitously, by the generosity of its proprietor.

But previously to going, Mr. W. sent a sharp letter to Bradford, assuring them that he would come to Bradford, and if he could form another cause he would do so rather than the people should be deprived of the services of any minister they wished to hear, and when Mr. W. was at Bradford he aimed at no end but that which an honest conscience could say Amen to.

John Kershaw, then, has in this matter made falsehood his refuge, and to such refuge he is quite welcome.

"But some rallied round the man, but their conduct was very immoral."

Rallied round the man—what man?—we can hardly tell here whether John means the Yorkshireman or the London man, but be it which it may, "their conduct was very immoral." Oh, of course, who, dare to suppose there can be any morality, or salvation, or anything else that is good, anywhere but within the pale of—"We are, and none else?" Ask John his opinion of persons not within the pale, he will dance his knee, or knees, and give a significant move of the head, and in half-muttered words convey an insinuation as keen as the sharpest piece of cutlery in Sheffield. But, were those who rallied round the man immoral? John K. says they were, and surely John is an "honourable" man, and yet the men, whom John declares immoral, give their names to the public, and challenge the universe to prove them immoral, and yet John says they are, and surely John is an "honourable" man. Pity this should demand a doubt.

But John Kershaw says Mr. W. wished to show what a great man he was. Well, if he had such a wish he has no doubt failed, but if Mr. W. has failed in his supposed wish, certainly if Mr. Kershaw has not made himself a great man, he has in this matter made himself a great *something else*.

Since Mr. Kershaw preached the sermon, now under notice, Mr. W. has written to Bradford twice, and sent in the second letter the extract above given. The following are the answers, with the names attached, of the immoral men who rallied round the man. It will be perceived that Mr. K. has not said a word against the deacon, the *dear soul*, who, about the time he refused the people the liberty of hearing Mr. W., lost (*dear tried soul*) several pounds at gambling.

Zoar is the name of the chapel at Bradford.

Bradford, Feb. 7, 1848.

DEAR MR. WELLS,—I received yours, and we will endeavour to answer it. We are sorry to hear that Mr. Kershaw has been so indiscreet in his sermon at Manchester. We are not aware of any inconsistency that we have manifested since you were

last here, excepting the publishing an address you have here inclosed, with a view of producing some better effect, but it has not produced the desired end. Instead of that, Mr. Kershaw took an occasion to make some personal remarks when preaching in Zoar Chapel.

Dear Sir, we are happy to state that your last visit here had a very good effect for the time being, not only with us, but with the church generally at Zoar, and caused them to convene a meeting that the officers should give an account why they refused you the use of the pulpit; and they, the officers, finding themselves in an error, promised never to do the like again, without consulting the church.

N.B. It is with regret that we hear that Mr. Kershaw has made any remarks relative to you in the sermon you refer to; but we do not wonder at it, as we know he is in the habit of doing the same to others. We conclude by assuring you of our best christian love, and may the truth of God run and be glorified by your ministration, is the earnest and sincere desire of yours in the covenant engagements of a Triune Jehovah,

HENRY RAWSON,
JOS. WELLS,
GEORGE WOOD.

Bradford, Yorkshire, Feb. 14, 1848.

DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD,—We have received yours of the 8th, and we are happy to learn of your being well in health, and especially that the God of all grace is prospering you in his work. We are not wishful to enter into commotion or confusion with Mr. Kershaw or the people of Zoar Chapel; but generally to let them take their own course, for the Judge of all the earth will do right, He knowing the secrets of all hearts.

Nevertheless, when falsehood and slander are propagated by either ministers or people, we think it our duty before men to vindicate our moral character.

Dear Sir, we now come to the sermon of Mr. Kershaw, and are sorry to see the statement you give of his sermon, and believe that there is not a word of truth in it, however Mr. Kershaw may believe the Yorkshire gentleman; in your conduct of the last visit you paid to Bradford, whether in your thrusting yourself in or in attempting to raise a new interest, the contrary was the fact. For the principal part of the Church at Zoar was delighted with your ministration of the word and your deportment generally.

As respects the immoral conduct of the friends that rallied round you we think that if Mr. Kershaw had applied the phrase to the thimble-rigging deacon at Zoar Chapel, which he nor any of the church will deny, that he was brought before

the church and found guilty of gambling with the thimble-rigging gentry, and still holds his deaconship, which we cannot bear, it would have applied with greater force; Mr. Kershaw is aware of the whole case. We wish not to boast of our moral character, but we feel thankful that the God of all grace has preserved us from immoral conduct, and are ready to meet Mr. Kershaw, or any other individual, on that charge. We believe the Yorkshire gentleman referred to by Mr. Kershaw is the very individual that was chairman at the *following meeting*, and sanctioned the publishing the address we sent you in our last.

At a meeting, held on 2nd day of May, 1847, at the house of Mr. Jos. Wells, Manchester Road, the following resolutions were adopted.

1st, That it is the opinion of this meeting, in consequence of the unscriptural proceedings of those who have had the management of conducting the affairs of Zoar Chapel, and the dissatisfaction that has arisen from it, even from the commencement to the present period, calls upon us to endeavour to take some steps, the Lord being our helper, for the better establishment of righteousness as contained in Paul's Epistles to the Corinthians, where the discipline of a gospel church is faithfully set forth, in doctrine, experience, and practice.

2nd, That the money paid to the officers of Zoar Chapel in shape of seat-rents be handed over to the treasurer appointed by this meeting for twelve months from this date; and if, at the expiration of that time, they (the officers) of the above chapel conduct the affairs as becometh the gospel of Christ, then the money in the hands of the treasurer be refunded. But should they continue to manifest that despotic and tyrannical spirit which has marked their proceedings heretofore,—should the Lord in his providence send any of his faithful servants who preach his discriminating truth, and be refused the pulpit in Zoar Chapel, we shall discharge his expences for preaching elsewhere out of the aforesaid funds.

3rdly, In order to carry out the above object, there shall be officers chosen, consisting of chairman, secretary, treasurer, and committee.

(Signed)

RICHARD LEE, *Chairman.*

We conclude by subscribing to you-our best christian regards, hoping that all will be done with christian charity, the glory of God, and the exaltation of Christ's kingdom.

Yours, dear brother in the Lord,

HENRY RAWSON,
JOS. WELLS,
GEORGE WOOD.

We hope next month to show that Mr. Kershaw in one of the doctrines he denounces is as deluded as ever was any mortal in this world.—EDs.

THOUGHTS ON DEATH.

“Man dieth, and wasteth away; yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?”

Nothing is more humiliating to the great and the proud, than the consideration that they must die. The Bible declares the important fact, which is perhaps one reason that its company by many is avoided, and its authority in part denied, while the truth of it cannot be overturned.

To stifle and prevent the uprising of any unwelcome thoughts upon the subject, recourse is had to everything that can please the flesh, and put the evil time far away. Others, from a consciousness of the certainty of its approach, knowing that “it is appointed unto man once to die, and after death the judgment,” manifest plainly their ignorance of divine teaching, by rejecting the only way, and by preferring to plead their own cause at that solemn bar, saying, “In thy name we have done many wonderful works,” vainly imagining that these flimsy cobwebs, woven by human ability, can stand them good in that important crisis. Their webs, however, shall not become garments; the fire of God’s wrath will consume them as in a moment; naked and ashamed will every soul stand, not found clothed with Christ.

Death will come, and, prepared or otherwise, “no man hath power over the spirit, to retain the spirit, and there is no discharge in that war. All flesh shall perish together, and man shall turn again to dust.”

The greedy grave, with open mouth, is loudly crying, “Give, give!” Whilst industrious death is hourly providing the wherewithal to satisfy its craving, yet it never hath enough. Old and young, rich and poor, the rustic and the scholar, the righteous and the wicked, the beggar and the prince, are alike embraced within death’s mighty grasp. Oh! the mercy to those to whom it is granted to be enabled to say, from heartfelt experience, “We look not at the things that are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.”

But—

“How shocking must thy summons be, O death!
To him who is at ease in his possessions—
Who, counting on long years of pleasure here,
Is quite unfurnished for that world to come!
In that dread moment, how the frantic soul
Raves round the walls of her clay tenement,

GOSPEL AMBASSADOR.]

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[APRIL, 1848.]

Runs to each avenue, and shrieks for help,
 But shrieks, alas, in vain! how wishfully she looks
 On all she's leaving, now no longer hers!
 A little longer, yet a little longer,
 O might she stay to wash away her stains,
 And fit her for her passage; mournful sight!
 Her very eyes weep blood; and every groan
 She heaves is big with horror; but the foe,
 Like a staunch murd'rer steady to his purpose,
 Pursues her close through every lane of life,
 Nor misses once the track, but presses on;
 Till, forced at last to the tremendous verge,
 At once she sinks to everlasting ruin."

Such is the end of those that have no God; who live as fools, and die dishonourable deaths, rejected and despised. Their hope is cut off. In that very day their thoughts perish, and all their earthly plans are thwarted. The solemn warning, "This night thy soul shall be required of thee," will dash the hopes of all that hear the sound, but have no footing on redeeming blood.

If the reader be a trembling, hoping, fearing, doubting, and yet believing clinger to the hope set before us in the gospel, it may be said of him or her, in the language of an apostle, "Beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation." For though we must needs die, and are as water spilt on the ground, there is hope concerning this thing, because Jesus the forerunner has descended into the tomb. He became subject, or obedient unto death, and the righteous hath hope in his death. He fought the battle with the monster, disarmed him of his sting, showed that the grave could not contain him beyond the appointed time, and the never-to-be-forgotten blessedness results from this, that because it could not hold him, neither can his people be holden of it beyond the time decreed; for, "Because I live, ye shall live also;" corporeally, as well as spiritually; so that by faith the heirs of salvation can sometimes anticipate the challenge, "O grave, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting?" even while incarcerated in this prison of mortality, which, like a fetter, clogs the energies of the aspiring soul, which fain would be where Jesus is. More fully, however, will this exultation be realised, at the resurrection of the just.

How many of the dear children of God, who have been made savingly acquainted with the truth as it is in Jesus, under darkness of soul, have trembled at the prospect of meeting the dread foe, death; remembering, it may be, that it is said, "Say ye to the righteous, it shall be well with him;" but are not able to discover the things that characterize them as those interested in the declaration. They see not their signs, and the tokens they can discover make them afraid; for in their feel-

ings they are dwelling at the uttermost part of the earth. How necessary, and oh, how highly to be prized, is the ministry of the Holy Ghost, in bringing into peaceful remembrance of these heirs of salvation the gracious things that have been spoken of them by the Eternal Three, that bear record above! "He shall take of mine, and show it unto *you*," said the dear Redeemer. He shall take of my love, of my atoning blood, of my complete righteousness, of my perfect salvation, of my exceeding great and precious promises, and show them unto *you*. He shall testify of me, that "I am, that I am." "The same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." The life, the light, the joy, the hope, the peace, the heaven, the rock, the high tower, the hiding-place, and eternal home for all my brethren, and that in me there is no death. He was manifested to destroy "him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver them who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage."

It is a blessed thought that Jesus came to destroy every enemy. The devil is an implacable enemy; and has he not been destroyed as to his uncontrolled dominion in the hearts of God's people? Born of the Spirit, they are no longer captives at his will, for the prey has been taken from the mighty, and the lawful captive has been delivered.

Sin is also an enemy that has been destroyed as to its domineering authority in the experience of the regenerate, being put away by the atoning blood of the Lamb; blotted out first from the debt book, and removed from the consciences of those who are thus favoured to draw near with a full assurance, having the conscience sprinkled with this precious blood; and though often afar off by the wicked workings of lust and infidelity, brought nigh again and again by the blood of the Lamb.

Unbelief, carnality, worldly-mindedness, darkness, pride, folly, and many more things, are enemies which the heaven-born soul is sorely plagued with; yet doth the Lord sometimes graciously command his servants to come forth and put their feet on the necks of these kings, his and their enemies; and the happy time will come, when it shall be said, "The enemies ye have seen to-day, ye shall see no more for ever;" and "the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." Then shall the believer sing as did Moses and the children of Israel, "I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously," &c.

My soul dares not contemplate the inevitable event of meeting the dread foe, whenever it may come, apart from the hope that Jesus is my friend, and will be with me in the trying hour, according to his gracious word: "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee. When thou walkest through the fire,

thou shalt not be burned, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee."

How many of the Lord's standard-bearers and trumpeters have been called home of late! Some who for years have lifted up their voice in the cause of God and truth—have borne testimony of the efficacy of redeeming blood—have witnessed of the precious person of the great Redeemer, as being "all over glorious, the fairest among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely." Yes, they have rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer reproach by carnal men, professors and profane, in speaking of the majesty, the mercy, and the condescension of Him who, while he could be the adopted son of a carpenter, was at the same time the Creator of all things. This is an ocean of wonders too deep and too broad to be fathomed or measured by the sons of men, or even by the highest angel. Both must be content to stand in wonder on the shores of this sea immeasurable, and exclaim, "Great is the mystery of godliness, God was manifest in the flesh."

They have testified of these things, but they are *dead*. Shall we, however, sorrow for them as those that have no hope? No! They are taken from the evil to come; they are gathered to their fathers; they sleep in Jesus; and such, when he comes "a second time, without sin unto salvation, will God bring with him. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a *shout*, with the *voice of an archangel*, and with the *trump of God!*" Talk we of sounds? here is a trio that shall change the living, and awake the dead. "For we, which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together *with them* in the *clouds*, to meet the Lord in the *air*; and so shall we ever be with the *Lord*. Wherefore (saith the Holy Spirit by the apostle) comfort one another with these words."

Not only has the Lord called many of his ministers home, but also others of his family, who have listened to these truths, who have sat under the shadow of the tree of life, and found the fruit sweet to the spiritual taste,—many who have mourned and groaned, and sighed and cried, doubted and feared, hoped and believed, and have fought with sin, Satan, and the flesh, but have now escaped mortality. Thus is the great husbandman gathering home the fruits of his husbandry. "Ye are God's husbandry." He is gathering the sheaves into his garner. The harvest truly is great, considered in the aggregate.

The gates of the celestial paradise stand open continually to receive the vessels of mercy afore prepared to glory, and now made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.

One here, and another there, silently puts off the robe of flesh, to be clothed upon with their house which is above, and,

ere they are aware, they find themselves in the presence of God and the Lamb. No years, or months, or days, or moments of suspense, between the painful period of nature's dissolution and heaven's untiring joys, but quicker far than the most vivid lightning-flash, the soul is ushered in to be with God in glory. "*Absent from the body, present with the Lord.*" Night and day, winter and summer, does the heavenly traffic go on, without cessation, from east and west, from north and south. "Bring my *sons* from far, and my *daughters* from the ends of the earth; even *every one that is called by my name*, for I have created him for my GLORY. I have formed him, yea I have made him."

Could we behold, as angels do, the ransomed throng, rushing within those gates of pearl, casting their crowns at once at the Redeemer's feet, how astonishing would be the sight! But faith (not fancy), founded on the word of God, can contemplate the great reality, believing that the work of calling home will still continue, until every scholar shall have come from school; till every bottle shall be filled with new wine; until every jewel destined to adorn the mediatorial crown of Jesus shall have been made up; and until God shall have accomplished the number of his elect. Till then the oil of grace will freely flow, when it shall be said, "There's not another vessel!"

How precious, then, is that salvation that takes up worms, and gives them wings of faith and love, to soar sometimes above the passing things of time, to look within the veil, anticipating the period when faith shall give place to full realisation, and they bid a long farewell to all terrene concerns!

But who can prospectively regard death, and not quail before it? There are two classes of persons who do so, but under widely differing circumstances. First, some of the fallen sons of men, whose chains the prince of darkness has doubly rivetted; whose consciences on this matter are seared as with a hot iron. Vain confidence (the constant attendant on ignorance during life, as the immortal Bunyan beautifully portrays it, does not desert him in death, but faithfully helps *him* over the river) helps them, so that there is no bands in their death; their strength is firm; they see no danger, and feel no fear as yet. But ah, after death, what reception is met with! Outer darkness! Gnashing of teeth! Weeping and wailing! "I will laugh at your calamity, saith the Lord, and mock when your fear cometh."

Secondly, the child of God can think of death, yes, and meet it too, without alarm, when the Lord is pleased graciously to manifest himself as the death destroyer. He feels (it may be) all the pains of nature's dissolution; his quivering lips can scarcely articulate the name Jesus. Yet his soul is built upon the *Rock*.

The waves of affliction cannot sever him therefrom; his faith is fixed; his hope is fast; and Jesus is precious, and the language of his soul is, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly."

Death, however, is busy; his shafts fly thick and fast, but all are billeted, as to time, and place, and object; and with regard to the Lord's peculiar people, it may be said truly:

"Not a single shaft can hit,
Till the God of love sees fit."

All other victims, where precious blood is not, there sin in all its damning power is; sin constitutes the sting of death to them, and the strength of sin, or the power of the sting of death, is the law. Hence it follows, that those who desire to be under the law, as a covenant of works in life, and are not delivered from it by the great law-fulfiller ere death arrives, the solemn consequences are obvious—that the law, inflexible as it is, immutable as it is, continues to hold such, and holds them guilty too. Will not the law watch over the sleeping dust of those who die in sin, until the resurrection day, as objects of its charge, and hold their souls amenable to all the penalties incurred by nonconformity on the one part, and violation on the other, until the judgment, when soul and body shall be re-united to receive the final sentence, "Go, ye cursed, into everlasting fire," &c.? I think it will.

There is one thing certain, that the eyes of the writer of these few passing thoughts, and those of them who are pleased to peruse them, must very soon (allowing the longest period usually allotted to man) be closed in *death*; and, therefore, if made truly sensible of this, and our need of a refuge, the all-important question with each is, Has the Lord Jesus taken away the sting of death for *me*? Has he obtained the victory over the grave for *me*? Has he loved *me*? chosen *me*? redeemed *me*, by giving *himself* for *me*? Upon the truth of this matter (perfectly known to God) depends the momentous fact as to whether death will be the entrance gate into the highest heaven, or into the lowest hell.

It is, therefore, a matter of importance to my soul, and I desire, by the Lord's help, to pray, "So teach me to number my days, that I may apply my heart unto *wisdom*," or Christ, who is the wisdom of God in a mystery, and who of God is made unto his people *wisdom*, righteousness, &c.

"By man came *death*." By man (or by Him who is God and man in one glorious mysterious person) came the resurrection from the dead. So that we cannot have too much to do with Jesus Christ. He is the *one thing needful*! To be in *Him*, to be living *on Him*, to be sitting at His feet, learning His will, and to be looking for His coming, is blessed; for He

will come, and blessed are they that love his appearing. Of such it may be said, "It is well;" and concerning such the lines by James Betts are true:—

"Death's but a messenger at most
To those who in the Lamb can boast;
He comes, and just his errand tells—
Off goes the soul with Christ to dwell."

Swanscombe.

I. C. J.

LETTER TO A MINISTER.

February 10, 1848.

DEAR PASTOR,—Feeling my mind comforted by the remarks you were enabled to make at the Lord's table, I feel encouraged to write a few lines to you, and though I am almost confined from attending the means of grace, yet I find the Lord can and does bless his own truth. I have often felt the truth of the remark you made the last sermon I heard, Nov. 21, from Acts xii. 7, when you said the Lord always smote us on the right side, and knew when or where to smite. Sabbath after sabbath has passed since, and I have often felt a wish to attend the Lord's house, but have been detained, through my mother's illness, and sometimes by my own; I have sometimes been enabled to see and feel it is well; indeed, when I see in some so little care about the things of eternity, I feel well satisfied with the Lord's dealings with me, for I can say I have found that times of trial have often been most profitable. The week before last I was taken ill, which illness was so violent and lasted so long that I had no idea I should live, but the Lord was pleased to support my mind. I felt composed and happy, though some things seemed very trying, as my dear mother seemed to fear my death. I felt it much, the thought of leaving her, but the Lord was pleased to apply these words to my mind, "It is the voice of my Beloved, lo, he cometh." I could not tell whether it was in death, or not, but all natural ties seemed loosed, and I began thinking of your ministry, and can say, felt the power of it as much as ever I did in the Lord's house. It is no small mercy to hear the truth, for though we do not always feel the power while hearing, yet the Lord often blesses the word after, to the soul, according to promise, "I will send you another Comforter, and he shall reveal all things to you." I have often thought how wonderful the Lord increases it; sometimes only a few words are multiplied, like the five barley loaves and few small fishes which fed so many, but we read, "His word was with power." I felt while thinking of dying, of the vast importance of the ministry, and the greatness of the work, a messenger of glad

tidings; I think I never felt my soul so drawn out to the Lord for success on your ministry; for while some are offended with a plain statement of truth, we who feel our own weakness are glad to hear of a full and free salvation. I could not but feel sorry lately to hear a person say with no good feeling, you preached the highest doctrines of the high; I felt thankful that the Lord would not let me be satisfied without the highest of the high, and asked myself the question, what is the highest doctrine? The words of Paul were immediately brought to my mind: "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of Christ, by whom the world is crucified to me, and I unto the world." Oh, I thought, what can be higher or a more blessed doctrine than the doctrine of the cross? there the greatest mystery was made known to us. I felt more astonished than ever at the wonders of the love of God, while you were speaking of Christ bearing our sin. It is when we are led to contemplate the wonderful love of God that we sink in self, and are satisfied with every trial the Lord is pleased to lay upon us, and can feel to tread the world beneath our feet. Oh, may he reveal more and more of it to your soul, that you may be more than ever in love with a precious Jesus!

Yours in Christian love ———.

THE ENEMY DEFEATED.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE GOSPEL AMBASSADOR.

Norwich, March 16, 1848.

DEAR SIRS,—We have just had Mr. Osbourn here, better known to you than myself; but, having heard him, I feel constrained to confess with shame how prejudiced I was against him, only from what I had heard and read, but can now say that under his ministry I find the power of the Lord was indeed present to heal, and it has quite removed that accursed spirit of prejudice and watching for evil to make a man an offender for a word, so far as regards Mr. O. at any rate, and I would advise any one that has felt the same feelings against Mr. O., to hear him for themselves, if opportunity offers. You are no doubt aware that there is one professed minister of the gospel that seems raised up to look very sharp after, not the BRIGHT, but the BLACK spots of his brethren in the ministry, and has very sharply rebuked some that we have long looked upon to be saints of God, and one aged minister in particular, whose praise has long been in many churches. This has very much pleased some of the enemies of truth in these parts, and it has deeply grieved some real friends, and very much staggered and prejudiced

others. And to see so young a man rebuking the elders, 1 Tim. v. 1, and then telling us how comfortable he feels under it all, having the approbation of both God and conscience, so much so that one would think it had been said to him, "Well done, good and faithful servant;" and then the pleasure that he seems to feel in this strange business has been a matter of wonder to me, whether the Lord did set him at the work, unless he should prove a Shimei, of whom David said, "Let him curse, for the Lord hath bidden him." Time will perhaps interpret this matter. When Mr. Osbourn arrived in his native land, our zealous friend soon had his eye upon him, and says: *That he was very uncomfortable about him.* This was I suppose before he had weighed him up, for then the matter was soon settled, and a book of 12 pages was kindly sent out to CAUTION us poor simple creatures. This book I read, which bears very hard upon Mr. O.; he has not a few black spots only, but is made to appear black all over, for he is described as *a wolf, with very little sheep's clothing to cover him.* I had not then read his "Lawful Captive Delivered," nor heard him preach, and must confess that this wretched book, with other reports against him, was quite enough to raise a prejudice against him in my mind. I believe the very devil is enraged against this floating lamp, as he calls himself, and has stirred up many to throw dirt upon him, and it would be strange if some did not stick for a time. I heard five sermons, out of seven, that he preached in this neighbourhood, and I feel constrained to say, Let others rail, but bless thou. Blessed be God I no longer want to know what other people think of him, for the Lord in mercy to my soul removed all prejudice, and let me feel it to be a time of refreshing from his blessed presence. I was made to admire the grace of God in his dear servant, and no longer wish to look for his black spots, the devil will be sure to do that. Dust is to be the serpent's meat, and I wish to leave him and his seed to search it out, and eat up the sin of God's people, until they are choked with it. I know it will be said of all God's dear saints: Thou art all fair, my love, there is no spot in thee. But I am grieved that this aged saint that is come to take a last look at his native land, and preach the word of life, should be thus treated and insulted, even if he has erred by a few unguarded expressions, but so it must be; through evil and good report, all such must pass. The longer he preached here the more acceptable his ministry appeared, so that many are wishing for a second visit, and I believe if he should remain in England a few months longer, the Lord will wipe away the reproach cast upon him, and make his own people willing to receive his own sent servant. I felt a sweet union of soul with him, and so did many others that I trust know the Lord for themselves; he told me that you

had spread his name in England more than any one, by publishing his "Lawful Captive Delivered," and I felt constrained to send you these few lines, confessing my weakness in being led by others. Mr. O. is likely to give offence, even to some friends, by preaching wherever the Lord, in his providence, may open a door, and I remember, George Whitefield did the same, in Scotland, when the Erskines wished him to remain with them, because they were the Lord's people. Then, says he, the rest must be the devil's people, so I must go, for I am come out to plunder his kingdom. I am, dear Sir,

Yours respectfully,

ONE THAT HAS HEARD FOR HIMSELF.

John iv. 42.

[The above letter has done our hearts good.—Eds.]

REVIEW OF MR. KERSHAW'S SERMON—(concluded).

WE now proceed to close our review of the sermon by Mr. John Kershaw, noticed in our last number. There are two items with which we shall not trouble ourselves; the one is *non-chastisement for sin*; this is a doctrine with which the church at Oldham-street has nothing to do, except it be justly to reject it;—the other accusation is, that 'sin in *thought* is as bad as sin in *practice*. This notion, it seems, was advanced by *one individual*. Was it right, then, in Mr. Kershaw, to make this solitary instance a matter of accusation against a whole people?

We have no ill feeling whatever towards Mr. Kershaw, but we do not see why his fleshly prejudices, any more than those of other men, should go unrebuked. Let him acknowledge that he has (as we showed last month) been misled, and we will pass the matter by. Let him ask himself how he would like publicly to be denounced, reviled, slandered, and vilified, and the people misled by such misrepresentations? We know it is written, "Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord, and I will repay;" but we wish not for vengeance, nor even for the judgment he hath so unrighteously judged to be judged to him again.

And if in our remarks last month we spoke out freely, it was only what we felt, and not one word of which do we repent. We might easily have assumed a garb of meekness, affectation, and lifeless humility; but we detest disguise. John Kershaw shall have laid before him our real thoughts and feelings upon the matter, and he need not fear that we carry a dagger under the cloak of pretended christian charity. No; we like openly to fight the matter out, and then we are easy;

for we have no desire that either anger should rest in our bosom, or that our good clothes should be burned.

Must not every one who heard the sermon clearly see that Mr. Kershaw laboured, both by *accusation* and *insinuation*, to gather up every possible fault or blemish against Mr. Wells? while not *one word* of acknowledgment of any use Mr. W.'s ministry had been at Manchester, nor of the help that Mr. W. was *temporally* to the cause at St. George's-road. Is this doing to others as Mr. Kershaw would others should do unto him? And who, in the present matter, is the aggressor but Mr. Kershaw himself?

We now proceed to show that Mr. Kershaw has altogether deluded, deceived, misled, and blinded the minds of the people upon what Mr. W. has said upon the doctrine of backsliding.

We shall then enter our protest against the *accusation*, that Mr. W. was an enemy to the late Mr. Gadsby, and close our remarks with a word or two to the present deacons at St. George's-road.

Now, as to the subject of backsliding, Mr. W., no doubt, in his young "untutored" days, used some expressions which really did not convey properly his own meaning; but as Mr. Kershaw, it seems, has read the pamphlets written by Mr. W. upon that subject, he might, from their general drift, have gathered Mr. W.'s *meaning*.

Mr. Kershaw represents Mr. W. as having denied what is generally *called* backsliding. Now here Mr. Kershaw is *entirely wrong*. Mr. W.'s writings upon this subject make backsliding to consist in that kind of *apostacy*, of which a regenerated man is not capable. Mr. Kershaw himself, in this very sermon, shows that there is a wilful apostacy, from which regenerated people are kept.

Let any one read the reply by Mr. W. to Mr. Abrahams, published eight years ago, and he will there see how *entirely* Mr. Kershaw has misrepresented the meaning.

Mr. Kershaw's real business was, if he wished to do justly, to have set forth Mr. W.'s *real* meaning, together with the *reasons* for such a meaning; then, after he had done this, to have shown that backsliding *did not* consist in the *wilful* apostacy of mere professors, but that all that are called backsliders are regenerated people; but Mr. K. not having done this, he has, in reality, done nothing but delude both himself and the people, and has left the main question entirely untouched.

He brings scriptures to prove what Mr. W. has never denied, and has blest himself and the people with a victory over *nothing*.

Now, then, Mr. K. having missed his way in the beginning,

necessarily went astray to the end; having given the people to understand that the "great advocate" (as he pleased to call Mr. W.) has denied what is generally called backsliding—having set out with this *false* proposition, his victory over the man of straw he had made was very easy.

Jer. iii. 14, 15, "Turn, O backsliding children, saith the Lord; for I am married unto you," &c. Now, then, what can be clearer than this? Very true, friend John; but why did you not give Mr. W.'s view of this scripture, and then your own, and so let the people judge between the two? Why did you not just show that the "great advocate" had insinuated that there was such a thing as an *old covenant marriage*, but which was national and temporal, and that the children of this old covenant marriage, the children of this Jewish kingdom, were long ago cast out; but that *new* covenant marriage to God is upon higher and infinitely better grounds?

And then why did you not state to them the reason that while *all* were invited to turn, that the promise was only unto *some*; "one of a city, and two of a family;" and that these *few* chosen out from the rest were to have pastors, &c.? If *all* were regenerated children, or children of the new covenant, how is it that the promise, as well as the invitation, was not unto all? Why, if all were *regenerated* people, is this *distinction*?

Why did you not tell the people that Mr. W. had said that *all* these backsliders were *unregenerate*, but, being God's national people, were within old covenant invitations, and that some among them were, in *divine purpose*, new covenant people, and that therefore he would take these from the rest, and *bring* them to Zion?

Now, then, sir, if the backsliding of this people did not consist in a wilful apostacy, and a wilful worshipping of the golden calf of Jeroboam—if, then, backsliding did not consist in this, then you ought to have shown, from the *Scriptures*, in what their backsliding did consist; and also, if *all* these backsliders were regenerated persons, then you ought to have shown how it is the *promise* is unto *some only*, but not unto all.

Now, if all these backsliders were *unregenerated* persons, then the promise to take "one of a city, and two of a family," will mean that these shall be regenerated and brought *savingly* to know the Lord.

But if all these backsliders were regenerated persons, then it remains for Mr. Kershaw to show in what their backsliding consisted, and also why the promise is only unto *some*, but not unto all.

Mr. W. has supposed the 22nd verse belongs to those to whom the word was made effectual to salvation: "Return, ye

backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings;" (viz., put an end to them.) "Behold, we come unto thee, for thou art the Lord our God."

And when, friend John, you came to Jer. xiv. 7, why did you insinuate to the people that Mr. W. denied the divine authenticity of Jer. xiv.? Why did you thus delude the people? Why did you not tell them, that as the Lord *forbad* the prophet to pray for this people, for their *good* (see ver. 11)—that while, as a man of God, he was concerned, like Paul, for his brethren after the flesh, as well as for the true church—and that while it is written that "all things work together for good to them that love God," and yet God commanded the prophet *not* to pray for the *good* of the people; and that while this prayer is *recorded* by inspiration of God, yet if it had been from the immediate dictation of the Holy Ghost, would the Lord forbid a prayer indited by the immediate power of the Holy Ghost? So that however wrong (if he were wrong) Mr. W. was in such kind of reasoning, yet that is no reason why what he has said should be misrepresented. Mr. W., then, does *not* deny the divine authenticity of Jer. xiv.

It seems Mr. W. did not think the words "*our* backslidings" at all militated against his sentiment, looking at the words of the prophet as being, in this instance, not individual, but national. So that he (Jeremiah) was one of that *nation*, but *not* one of those persons whose backslidings were many. "Our backslidings, as a nation, are many." Isaiah was one of that *nation*, but *not* one of those persons who saw no beauty in Christ. Yet he says, "There is no beauty that *we* should desire him." Yet Isaiah saw his glory.

One more scripture to which Mr. Kershaw refers, and then we leave this part of our review.

Why, sir, did you represent Mr. W. as having given a mere *temporal* meaning to Hosea xiv., and that it has nothing to do with spiritual things? Have you in this done justice to Mr. W.?

Now to show that you are in this, as well as in other parts of your sermon, upon this point, *utterly at fault*.

The last pamphlet Mr. W. published upon this subject was in 1840; and from pages 15 and 16 we here give his own words upon this 14th chapter of Hosea:—

" 'I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely.' There is, in the love of God, in itself, no beginning; but, considered in the *manifestation* of it, there is a beginning, and here is a promise of *manifestative* love. The apostle assures us that the Lord's people are loved, even when dead in sin, Eph. ii. 4, 5, and the Lord in his own time will love them *openly*, as he has done from everlasting *secretly*, that is, freely and fully. 'I will love them freely;' here is a promise of something which has not yet been done; he had not yet loved them manifestatively; but, when this is done, their

backsliding is healed: the Latins render it, *curabo aversionem eorum*—I will heal their *aversion*; that is, put a stop to their enmity against the truth of God. So that the promise amounts to this, that the Lord would bring them nigh by the blood of Christ. Here they are as yet dead in sin, but they were to be brought to say, 'Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously;' and unto them the Lord would be as the dew, and they were (not to go back again, but) to grow as the lily, cast forth his roots as Lebanon; his branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive-tree, and his smell as Lebanon. This is very different from the state they were in *before* they were called by grace—before their backsliding was healed—before they were loved manifestatively. Before this change was wrought, they had come forward professionally; and being then sensual, having not the Spirit, they separated themselves; that is, after professing to follow the laws and statutes of Moses, they broke away from the same, and went back to that which they found most congenial to their carnal minds. Yet they were not of them who drew back to perdition, because they were included in the *new* covenant, and therefore were to be formed to show forth the praises of the Lord."

Thus then, Mr. Kershaw has done unjustly, altogether misrepresenting the subject he pretended to make plain; and sorry enough we were to find him acting so unrighteously.

When the dispute upon backsliding arose, Mr. W. was young, and ignorant of that *parsonic* vengeance that would surely come upon the mortal (especially if he should prosper in the ministry) who dared to whisper a thought not approved by certain parties; and had Mr. W. have foreseen the misrepresentation he would have to undergo, and the advantage to injure him taken of this circumstance, he would, perhaps, have remembered that it is not the wise man that uttereth all his mind; and while conscience would not suffer to keep back anything that was profitable, yet he may not have thought it worth his while to disturb the minds of people upon the meaning merely of a word, especially while that which is usually and by custom called backsliding, was not by him denied.

We now proceed to the next most unpleasant part of Mr. Kershaw's sermon. We will here give Mr. Kershaw's own words; and, as far as needful, a reply to the same:—

"Some years ago, a book (or pamphlet) was published, in which the author tried to prove it. The late dear Mr. Gadsby read it over, and was grieved at his heart to see such principles set forth. Its author afterwards *wanted* Mr. Gadsby to let him preach in his pulpit; but he flatly refused, and would not let him. Now this is from Mr. Gadsby's own lips. The author of the above sermon met Mr. Gadsby in London, when your esteemed minister proved to him the unscriptural nature of his publication, to which the author said he was sorry he had ever published it. With that he allowed the author of this error to come again and preach in his pulpit, when he renews the old *error* again, as *boldly* and *unflinchingly* as he did before. Mr. Gadsby seeing such gross error, stoutly said he would not let him preach any more here. I approved of what Mr. Gadsby did. What was the result? Why the author of these errors, when Mr. Gadsby had gone up to London, and a godly man had come here to preach. There were MEMBERS *laying their heads together* in the DARK, and unknown to the deacons too; they were *men of darkness*, rather than light; they laid their

heads together. What for? Why through being so intoxicated and taken up with the *man's wit, talent, and ability*. I can truly say, before God and this congregation, that the **SPLIT** WAS CAUSED by this **ERROR** and its **ADVOCATE**."

And again, when speaking about the matter at school, he said:—

"I don't know what they mean, except to *split* the old fellow's heart."

Now let us see how far Mr. Kershaw is correct in the above.

The *true* version of the interview with the late Mr. Gadsby, and publishing of the above-named pamphlet, is this:

That in the autumn of 1839, a person, a friend of Mr. Gadsby's, went to the house of Mr. W., and wished him (as Mr. Gadsby was at this friend's house) to go and have a little friendly conversation with Mr. Gadsby, saying that he wished to see Mr. Gadsby and Mr. W. friendly; accordingly Mr. W. went, and in the course of conversation the subject of backsliding came up, yet very little was said upon it. (Now be it remembered that Mr. W. had not yet been to Manchester at all.) Mr. Gadsby asked him if he did not think he had done wrong in publishing upon the subject. Mr. W. told him that perhaps it was not worth the trouble it cost. Mr. G. then asked Mr. W. if he did not think it was a *pity* he had introduced the sentiment; to which Mr. W. replied, that to acknowledge that would be to acknowledge he was wrong. Now if Mr. G., in the multiplicity of business, somehow or another inferred from this that Mr. W. had renounced the sentiment, it amounted simply to a mistake.

Now for the month of May following Mr. W. was invited to Manchester, but between this interview with Mr. Gadsby and the month of May following—namely, in January, Mr. W. was unexpectedly and unavoidably brought into public controversy with Mr. Abrahams, upon the doctrines of backsliding; this reply to Mr. Abrahams was the last pamphlet Mr. W. has ever published upon this matter.

It seems Mr. Gadsby did not see this pamphlet until after Mr. W. had been to Manchester, so that between the time of this interview with Mr. Gadsby, and the time of Mr. W.'s going to Manchester, nothing whatever passed upon the subject of backsliding, so that Mr. W. did *not* tell Mr. G. that he was sorry he ever published the above pamphlet.

Mr. W. is not aware that he did, at the time alluded to by Mr. Kershaw, wish to preach in Mr. Gadsby's pulpit, or that Mr. Gadsby refused his preaching there at the time and on the ground here alleged by Mr. Kershaw, for Mr. W. did preach again in Mr. Gadsby's pulpit in 1842.

In 1843, in one number of this work appeared on the wrapper a notice of another place being opened in Manchester. This was inserted (as the wrapper of the next month showed) without

Mr. W.'s knowledge, upon the publisher's own responsibility, while Mr. W. had not the most remote idea of anything in the shape of a division being at all likely to take place, and had no more to do with it than Mr. Kershaw himself had. Mr. Kershaw's representation is *utterly false*, and, as one proof thereof, we will just state that, in 1844, Mr. John Gadsby wrote to Mr. W. and put several questions, all of which Mr. W. answered to his satisfaction, and was again, after Mr. Gadsby's decease, invited to preach at St. George's Road, Manchester, all being satisfied that Mr. W. was perfectly free from those charges now reiterated by Mr. Kershaw.

But Mr. W., in his last sermon at St. George's Road, gave, by some remarks he made, very great offence; this caused a separation, and he has not preached there since.

And now what one evidence is there to show that Mr. W. was ever an enemy to the late Mr. Gadsby, or that he ever did or said one thing intentionally to hurt his mind?

What good will Mr. Kershaw or any other man do by thus keeping alive these falsehoods? And who the author of the above unbecoming and barbarous saying brought forward by Mr. K. is we know not.

Mr. Gadsby, as a man, was not without his faults and infirmities, but it is not our intention to be drawn into a definition of infirmities, common more or less to all men, nor on the other hand, to injure his memory by fulsome and repulsive adulation. We know where his weaknesses laid, and also in what consisted his excellencies.

He was led into a deep acquaintance with his own heart, was made acquainted with the remedy, and through long and much domestic privation and affliction, and through the vilest reproaches, slanders and persecutions, misrepresentations and falsehoods, he won his way along in the paths of life and grace, and knew in whom he had believed, and lived a life of heartfelt fellowship with eternal things, and so went into the deep in his ministry, as to bring up many a despairing sinner from Jonah's hell, and from the miry clay, and encountered effectually the powers of darkness, rushing in upon some of the strongest of the enemy's fortresses, and plucking as brands from the fire immortal souls; and not only so, but rising into the wonders of God's everlasting love, setting forth by no common or man-taught eloquence and power, the substitutional work of Immanuel, and running along beautifully with all the exercises of the children of God, carrying a fragrance and a power which none but heaven could bestow, and never once left to deviate from the way of salvation, but lived and walked therein, and died therein, and his memory remains dear and must remain dear to hundreds, or perhaps rather to thousands, and grieved enough

we are that Mr. Kershaw should compel us to range over a number of old misrepresentations long ago refuted, but our feelings, together with recollections hallowed, and ties sacred, forbid the memory of the late Mr. Gadsby receiving any indignity from us.

Let Mr. Kershaw acknowledge that he has been misled, and let him act as uprightly as Mr. W. did towards him in the Bradford affair, that after Mr. W. had suspected Mr. Kershaw he wrote to acknowledge he was wrong in that suspicion; let Mr. Kershaw thus do as he has been done by, and then we will acknowledge his integrity, and then we shall have peace founded upon truth.

The personal abuse Mr. Kershaw in his sermon heaps upon Mr. W. we pass by, as also his insult to the church and people at the Surrey Tabernacle, together with his fanciful notion of members at St. George's Road laying their heads together in the dark.

The Oldham Street people then stand clear of all the charges brought against them.

And we hope there may now be an end to all unpleasantness between Oldham Street and St. George's Road. Why should there be strife?—for, after all, they are brethren, and though we have spoken rather sharply of the *I am and none else* spirit, yet our most solemn prayer to God is that this spirit may now cease from among them, that the envy of Ephraim may depart, and the adversaries of Judah's welfare may be removed far away, that Ephraim may not envy Judah, nor Judah vex Ephraim, that they may unite to walk in that high way of holiness and peace which leadeth to everlasting life.

And we shall make no apology for noticing the present position of the deacons at St. George's Road.

It is a position of *most solemn responsibility*; you have in your hands (in connection with the church) a house built for God, and freed from debt by the hard strivings of the children of God. You have also seen the prosperous career and peaceful end of your late venerable pastor, who arrived at a good old age. You have seen how difficult it is to obtain a ministry suited to the demands of the place where you are stewards of God. You feel no doubt the difficulties of your present position, and can you, can we, harbour such a thought, that you can look with *indifference* upon the perishing thousands around you? Can we for a moment suppose that you deem it *unchristian* to feel a *compassion for the multitude*, and that while you see the house of God, with which you are connected, not half filled, can you thus witness the many outside and the few inside, without mourning before God in earnest prayer, and strong cries to him to arise and compel them to come in, that his house may be filled? If these be not your feelings, how will your consciences

stand before God? Oh, do not quiet and lull yourselves with the notion, that because but *few* find the narrow way, that you are hereby authorized to be *content* that nothing, or next to nothing, should be doing.

The ministers you have had no doubt have done their best, no man can exercise gifts which he does not possess, or give success to his own labours; but while, on the one hand, you would not think of fixing upon or choosing as a stated minister one of whose experience, or character, or doctrine, you had any just suspicion; so, on the other hand, it would be worse than madness in you to choose one, the grace and gifts and power of whose ministry did not fill, or all but fill the place. Remember Manchester is neither a village nor a small town. The God of all grace open your eyes, if they be not open, but we hope they are open, upon this matter! What holy, what gladdening delight have we in our heart, in seeing so clearly the blessing of the Lord at Oldham Street! and now we long to see St. George's Road rise and prosper too. We are not ashamed to say that we glory in the prosperity of Zion. Yes, the language of Psalm cxxii. verse 7, speaks the very language of our inmost soul: *Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces.*

Will you then, can you, for one moment, act in your holy office before God as though it was your business to obtain a ministry that should please the itching ears, or feed the vain conceits, and nurse the blind prejudices of half-a-dozen bigots, who go to the house of God more to be furnished with matter for gossip, than to seek mercy, or grace, or salvation, or the real good of their never-dying souls?

The God of heaven and earth enable you to cast away all fleshly prejudices and partiality, and judge of men and things (not as Mr. Osbourn was judged of by some among you, by mere reports), but by the word of God, and by that alone, and that you may also be kept from distorting the word to party purposes.

You must give an account to God of your stewardship; and is this a *light* matter? Can anything be more awful than to abuse the momentous trust reposed in you? *Where* then are your affections, where are your desires and anxieties, if they be not concentrated upon the object of your office? If *this* be not the case, you are *mocking* your Maker, holding an office in *form*, but *destitute* of its life and power. Nothing—no, nothing—should satisfy you but a ministry by which sinners shall be converted to God, and by which the living are fed and refreshed, and helped on through this vale of tears.

The Lord grant, then, that you may not lose sight of the nature, the heavy responsibility, the demands and claims of your present position, that you may wrestle with God in prayer,

and give him no rest until he make Jerusalem a praise in your midst, Isa. lxii. 7 ; not as being lords (which we trust you have no desire to be) over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock ; and then, when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory which fadeth not away, 1 Pet. v. 3, 4.

Eds.

THE EFFECTS OF ARMINIAN CHARITY.

MESSRS. EDITORS,—May the Lord bless the labours of your hands in sending forth the Gospel Ambassador. If you think this extract worthy a place in your pages, you will please insert it.

Yours, &c.,

Two Waters, Feb. 7, 1848.

H. H.

AFTER God had delivered my soul from that gilded bait called, or rather nicknamed, charity, I walked about five months in the happy enjoyment of electing love, till one day I dropped into company with a very strenuous Arminian, who lived at Weston Green, in the parish of Thames Ditton, in the county of Surrey. He was one who appeared to walk like an angel, and was fourteen years old in Arminianism. I mentioned God's love to my soul, and innocently told him how I had fought against election ; how God had applied it to me, and my comfort in it, not in the least suspecting that he would deal with my conscience as a thief. However, his visage soon changed with envy. He told me I was wrong, and added, I was but young in the ways of God, but he was of long standing. I, fool like, thought length of days must teach wisdom, Job xii. 15, not considering that old men are not always wise, nor do the aged at all times understand judgment, Job xxxiii. 9. However, he being very zealous (though not according to knowledge) took me into a private apartment, to expound to me the way of the God of this world more perfectly than I desired to know it.

He brought forth a treatise written by one Fh—h—r, and he entertained me with it almost the whole afternoon. The book, as far as I can remember, seemed as sound as flesh and blood could make it, and appeared as good a web as carnal reason is capable of weaving from the quills or skeins of human invention ; and in order to set it off there was here and there a text of Scripture jumbled in. But that good author seemed to be more earnest for fruit than for engrafting, and I believe would be better pleased with a crop of leaves than a good root. However, we are told not to expect grapes from thorns, nor good fruit from corrupt trees. I often cried out, Oh, sir, that is boggy ground, I cannot venture on that ! Don't speak against it, says he, you don't understand it. So he laboured to put a

better face on it, but it was still one of the lean kine. He laboured with more fervency to bring my soul from Christ than ever I did to bring a soul to him. I speak this to my shame. Finding my head like a gentleman's garret, filled with this lumber, I fled out of the house both wounded and naked; I went that night to hear the word preached, but there was nothing for me. Free will and free grace were striving perpetually in my mind; for a month or more I had nothing in me but this *pro* and *con*. The thought of falling from the blessed state in which I had long been, and being damned after all, knowing what a dreadful place hell was, by the dreadful pains which I had felt of it, and knowing what a powerful adversary Satan was. Alas! said I, if final apostacy from a state of grace be true, and I only stand in my own strength, fall I must, and then there is no more sacrifice for sin, but a fearful looking for of judgment, Heb. x. 27. These things filled my soul with slavish fear, threw me into bondage, again set me striving in my own strength, and my heart to fretting against the Lord, Prov. xix. 3. My evil tempers often made me sin, which stopped the mouth of prayer and praise, nor could I read, meditate, or stay my thoughts on anything; thus was my mind entangled in the Arminian labyrinth, till the billows of despair rolled over my soul, and I sunk in deep waters where there was no standing, so that the floods of despair overflowed me. This is the cause why I am so severe against that doctrine; but none but the burnt child dreads that fire.

Being one day busy in hoeing a sand walk, at Ewell, in Surrey, (mourning under my present distress of soul, and the perilous state I appeared to be in,) and reasoning that it was God's grace alone which begun and would surely carry on this work, the answer in my mind was, no. I had improved the day of grace myself, and falling away was a truth, for I was already fallen. This cut me so deep that I cursed the day I ever saw that wretch. Oh, said I, if Christ will but show me that the whole work was of him, and give me security for the future, I would never grudge to serve him day and night, I would not care how hard I worked, or how much I suffered, if an eternal portion of his love and presence was but secured to my soul. In answer to this, a voice from heaven sounded in my soul, with these words: Don't you know that the Scripture says, "No man can come to me, except the Father draw him." I answered in anger, with a loud voice: I know it says so. The answer came again, and said: If you can find a passage in Scripture where it is said a man has a power to come, then you may prove the Bible lies. This taught me that God held his power to command, though man has lost his power to obey. And as there are many who boast of will and power, God has an unde-

niable right to set them this impossible task, namely, to put away their evil, make themselves a new heart, learn to do well, make themselves clean, &c.; and, as a just God, damn them for not performing that task which they boast of having power to do. And as for the elect, I saw they were brought under the terrors of the law, and there set to work in their own strength to convince them of their inability to create in themselves a new spirit; and by spending their strength with nitre and much soap, and finding it nothing but washing the Ethiopian white, and that their iniquities are still marked before God, Jer. ii. 22, they fly for refuge for sovereign mercy in Christ, having spent all their living, and getting only worse instead of better than Christ gives them; a new heart and a new spirit makes them clean, causes them to walk in his statutes, and promises that they never shall depart from him, Ezek. xxxvi. 27. This I found was the privilege of a son, the other is the task of a servant. And the son is to abide in the house for ever, John viii. 35; but the servant is to be kicked out of doors, Gal. iv. 30. And although a gift of speech to preach or pray, or an alarm in conscience may be given to a servant in this life, yet they are all to be taken away again from him, but not from the son, he is to lose nothing of his inheritance for ever, Ezek. xlii. 16, 17. These things made the scale of Arminianism move up, and soon I saw it kick the beam, for all in that scale are lighter than vanity. But eternal election and final perseverance came down full weight, and I soon felt myself in that scale. This brought me out of the Arminian fog, and truth shone in my heart like a comet, and he that cannot reconcile these things has not lost his veil, and he that perverts them with open eyes is worse than a devil. From that moment I waged war against Arminianism, and, if God spares my life a hundred years longer, I hope he will employ me in this battle, and let me die in this fight, and I am fully persuaded I shall never doubt its being the battle of the Lord. Soon after, this champion (whose name is Hackston) attacked me again, and brought many passages to me which I had not considered. Yet God gave me understanding in them while he was bringing them forth, and enabled me to wrench the sword out of his hand, turn its edge against him, cut his ears, and made his countenance fall. And I lived to see his fancied joy wither, for I fear he was but a son of man, Joel i. 12, because he seemed to drop into the world again, and under every sermon he slept till it was over.

We had a parson in the church who was seldom sober a day in the week, but I never heard him say anything against this minister but if he went to hear an honest sound Calvinist, he generally wrangled against him, to those in company, all the way home; so it appeared not to be sin which he hated, but the truth of God.

I have often been enabled to stop their mouths when they have been contending for good works, in point of merit, by setting my works against theirs, and appealing to their own consciences for a testimony, as they lived close by me. I told them they promised to go, but went not. I said I would not go, but God made me go. I worked hard, yet felt myself unprofitable; they did nothing but cavil, and yet boasted of merit, and I have sometimes told them my works would weigh down the works of fifty of these Arminian trunkmakers; though we dare not boast before God, yet we are not to debase ourselves before hypocrites. The righteous falling down before the wicked is as a troubled fountain and corrupt spring, Prov. xxv. 26.

When they have been contending with me for final apostacy from grace (as they call it) I have told them, if they believed that they could finally fall, and be damned, they might fall, their faith was not the gift of God, nor the faith of God's elect; according to their faith (or rather their fancy) be it unto them. I believed I never should, and according to my faith it would be unto me, Matt. ix. 29. God is not bound to keep them on in his strength, who reject his omnipotent arm; I found I could not drag them out of their pit, and why should they want to pull us down from our rock? They have been forced often to confess to me that they were in bondage, and I don't wonder at it, for if truth will not make them free, there is no ground to expect lies will. These are some of the fruits and effects which my poor soul has felt of universal charity, which robbed me of that which was sweeter to my soul than life itself, I mean the peace of God, ruling in my conscience. I own the man was liberal enough of such as he had, he gave it me freely; but if a gentleman makes me a present of a draught of mercury, though it is a free gift, yet, if it kills me, I don't see much charity in it. Christian reader, beware lest thou get to dealing, or rather exchanging, as I did; it is called charity, but it is only exchanging; they will take away your peace and give you nought but confusion, and that man that takes away truth and gives me nothing but a fable has but a little right to a tribute of praise from me.—*Extract from Huntingdon's Arminian Skeleton.*

FREE WILL TOWARDS GOD.

LOVING FRIENDS, said Luther, our doctrine that free will is dead, and nothing at all, is grounded powerfully in Holy Scripture. But I speak of the free will towards God, and in causes touching the soul. For what should I dispute about that free will which governeth over horse and kine, money and riches? I know very well that God hath subjected to man all cattle and

the earth, &c. But that pertains not to this : if there were none other sentence but only that of St. Paul, They are taken captive by the devil at his will, we had ground and Scripture sufficient ; for to be the devil's captives is no freedom at all, seeing they are in such captivity that they must do ever what he will ; whereupon must needs follow that our free will is the devil's will. For according to his will they must live as his captives, and this is clear, as specified above.

Christ himself also concurrerth here with Luke xi., where he saith, " When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace, but when a stronger than he shall come upon him and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour, wherein he trusted, and divideth the spoils." Here Christ himself witnesseth that the devil possesseth those which are his in peace, unless a stronger than he overcometh him. We have also before our eyes the work of divine love itself ; namely, that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, died to deliver us from the devil, from death and sin ; then it were needless that Christ should have died for us. For I say he that is able, without Christ, to shun or outrun sin, the same may even as well shun and outrun death, for death is the punishment of sin. But I never yet heard of that human creature who made such proof of his free will against death ; but contrary, that death hath power over all creatures, which he could not have done if sin had not before taken captive and overcome all mankind.

By this act and article of faith in Christ do we remain, let the papists say what they will, and let them go on and proceed with their swinish censures as they please. No human creature shall bring us from this acknowledgment, that Christ hath delivered us from the devil, death, and sin. If this be true, there remaineth none other free will. For if that be a freedom, to be captive to the devil, to death, and to sin, then let it be a freedom to those that make their dreams and fancies of new gospels, against the true ancient gospel of Christ.—*Luther's Familiar Discourses.*

P.S. I send you these extracts, having but two objects in view, viz. : the glory of God, and the benefit of some of the Lord's people, who may be halting between two opinions, which perhaps I could not better accomplish, with the assistance of the Holy Spirit, than through the medium of the Gospel Ambassador ; and if it is the means of establishing but one in the faith of God's elect, I shall be amply rewarded.

SUBSTANCE OF A SERMON BY J. CORBITT.

"Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not unto thine own understanding." Proverbs iii. 5.

My text is a compound of exhortation and caution, and my audience are well aware that the exhortations and cautions of the Bible are all made to character; and the description of their character runs all through the word of God like a ray of light, darting with majestic power upon the objects of God's eternal love, quickening them to life, bringing them into light, teaching them that they are lost, revealing to them Christ, and giving to them faith, and commanding them to trust in him; revealing to themselves the deceitfulness of their own hearts, and the shallowness of their own reason, and then commanding them not to lean to their own understanding; for it would be inconsistent with reason to exhort a person to watch without *life*, or look without *light*, or walk without *feet*. Therefore, here we see, that the persons exhorted in God's word are quickened by the Holy Ghost, and made partakers of the divine nature, 2 Peter i. 4; and by this union the man is made a compound person of two directly opposite principles; the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit striveth against the flesh; these two principles in one man are not subject one to the other, neither indeed can be; the old principle always loves sin, the new always loves holiness. And so mysteriously united, and yet unmixed, are these two principles, that they cannot exist in this world, one without the other; for as the body without the soul is dead, so the soul without the body cannot exist in time. Thus Scripture shows that those two essential principles compose one man, and all their actions are charged upon them in the compound sense, in the eye of the law of God; for what the mind thinks, the man thinks; and what the hand does, the man does; and where the feet walk, the man walks; and what the eyes see, the man sees. Thus the law of God has to do with us as creatures, and not as abstract principles; for as the thought of vanity is sin, so the expression of the tongue is sin. Thus we see that God hath not taken away the lust of the flesh from his people, but hath put the heavenly treasure in their earthen vessel, that the excellency of the power might be of God, and not of man. Thus in the same person we find a love to sin and a love to holiness, faith and fear, submission and rebellion, patience and impatience, yea, hatred and love. Seeing that things are thus mysteriously managed by the Lord, may we not with propriety say, "Behold what God hath wrought!" and say with the scripture, "What God hath united together, let no man put asunder."

Seeing that it hath pleased the Lord, by his word, to recon-

cile my mind to settle with you in Manchester, I feel it incumbent on me this evening, fully to state my views of those sentiments which my friends stand charged with, as palpable error. And I shall endeavour to use great plainness of speech in this matter, so that if my sentiments do not accord with those of my friends, they shall have an opportunity to reject me, or not to receive me as their minister; for I will not, by the help of the Lord, rescind any particle of my faith, to please any man, or profit myself.

You, my friends, stand charged with three palpable errors; namely, the doctrine of non-backsliding, non-chastisement for sin, and despising the doubts and fears of the Lord's children.

First. Non-backsliding of God's children.

Looking at this doctrine, and the essential principle of grace, I fully believe that that principle cannot backslide, because it cannot sin. "Whatsoever is born of God doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God," 1 John iii. 9: and, "Whatsoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not," 1 John v. 18. Thus we see the safety of the church in Christ always stands perfect and complete; but if we, as creatures, "say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us," 1 John i. 8. "He that committeth sin is of the devil," 1 John iii. 8. And this every individual of Adam's race does every day of his life, both after and before regeneration. Thus, then, we see that the true Christian is a complex creature, with one principle completely holy, harmless, undefiled, and distinct from, and cannot sin; and the other, that is of and under the control of the devil, and never did, nor never will do anything but sin, abstractedly considered. Thus, then, two professors of religion might argue; one, from the principle of flesh, would say that he could do nothing but sin, and might call himself fool, and devil, and assert in truth that he deserves to go to hell. Another will as confidently declare that he never sins, according to Scripture, and declare that to will with him is always present.

Thus, looking at abstract principles, both would, according to the before-mentioned scripture, be right; but taking man as a compound creature, as he is known to the law of God, as an accountable being, both are certainly wrong. Thus, then, we see that the argument against and for non-backsliding, falls to the ground at once, when abstract principles are left to stand in their proper places, and man is kept in his proper place as an accountable being, and the doctrine of the final perseverance of the saints swallows up the doctrine of non-backsliding, as Moses' rod swallowed up the rod of the magicians; for, says Christ, "I give unto my sheep eternal life, and they shall never

communicates it, for he giveth more grace. Thus sometimes we find in the same person strong confidence, so that they verily think they shall never be moved, then again they sink in deep mire, where there is no standing; sometimes they say that their hope is perished from the Lord, then again the Lord is on their right hand, they shall never be moved. If the Lord's people were not the subjects of those fears and doubts, why should the Lord make use of so many "Fear nots?" Do not these belong to his children, and does not this prove that they are the subjects of fear and faith? and when faith reigns all is right, and when unbelief reigns, all is wrong; and if the obtaining of strong faith was in their power, I am sure they would never be without it; and if it was in their power to keep it, when they get it, I am assured that they would never part with it.

Thus we see that those who are thus exercised are not their own, but they are bought with a price, and that of their ownelves they can do nothing acceptable to God, or profitable to themselves. Thus then, you see, I do not censure the doubts and fears of God's people, but believe that they are the greater part of the combined army that spoil their peace, harass their rearward, and becloud their evidences; and so far from indulging in them, if I may speak for the rest, they are to me more terrible than an army with banners.

Thus, then, while I do not deny them being in the Christian, I do deny any real Christian's indulgence in them, and I do deny them being any part of religion, and feel that I need the Lord's daily presence to keep them away, for I well know, that if he hides his face, those thieves will soon rob me of all my comfort.

Thus I have endeavoured to preach out before you my sentiments on these points, as plain as my feeble ability will enable me, and if I have any objectors here, I should be most happy to meet you at my lodging to-morrow, to discuss the point.

May the Lord add his blessing; I add no more. Amen.

"When Christ appeared to Paul, going to Damascus, they that were with him were all in amaze; a voice they heard, but knew not what it spake. Why so, since they were as likely to yield as he? It was not indeed intended for them, nor the speech directed to them, but to Paul, and to Paul by name; but why to Paul above the rest, since he was the ringleader and chief persecutor in the company? Paul was a chosen vessel, and this, in brief, was the reason of it, as you have it recorded in Acts 22—14: 'The God of our fathers hath chosen thee that thou shouldest know his will.'"—*Etisha Coles.*

LUKE VIII. 46.

"Somebody hath touched me." The circumstances under which these words were laid on the mind may be, perhaps, profitably stated. A poor, greatly tried, and exercised brother, had been for many days in deep distress, on account of the near approach of a certain hour of all-involving temporal difficulty; again and again he had laid his case before the Lord, and intreated him to speak a word to him, by which he might gather that the Lord was on his side; but all was in vain; every petition he attempted to send up appeared to come back with the seal unbroken, unopened. Each succeeding morning brought heavier clouds, more darkness, and increasing coldness, until the dreaded day came; when, instead of the needed calmness and composure, all was turmoil and confusion. The day had arrived, with scarcely a single ray of probability that a deliverer would appear. The day dragged on to the appointed hour; still, all around portended destruction! In one short hour the storm and tempest would be unchained, and all must be swept to ruin! The crisis was a solemn one indeed; and none but those who know by feeling what it is to stand amid such terrible things, can understand such a position. The poor brother, at the last moment, retired to his usual hiding-place, expecting nothing short of the fulfilment of his worst fears, but desiring to meet the explosion while clinging to the rock. Prayer seemed long to have ceased; nothing now remained but "*a falling down with none to help*" (Ps. cvii. 12). At length, however, after remaining a long while, as it were, stupified by intense anxiety, and led more by custom than by any expectation of help from that quarter, he took from his pocket his little Bible, and clasping it in his hands, gave one imploring upward look, and opened it. His sensations could not have been more palpable, or instantaneous, had a flash of lightning struck him! His eye rested on the words, "*Somebody hath touched me!*" The ray of glory that shone upon the simple statement cannot be described; those only, who have had a word similarly spoken into the heart by the Holy Ghost, with all the power and majesty of God, can comprehend the astonishing effects produced upon a poor, heart-broken worm of the earth at such seasons of bitter distress, by the arrival of such a messenger of peace as this. In a moment the dark cloud was withdrawn—the thunder ceased to roll—the tempest was hushed—and the stormy billows of destruction, which, but one instant before, were swallowing up the sinking one, heard a voice from heaven, saying, "*Peace, be still!*" and there was a great calm! The heart of the trembling one filled to bursting with love and wonder, as the small

GOSPEL AMBASSADOR.] F [MAY, 1848.

still voice swelled in its melody into all the magnitude and glory contained in the precious words of Jehovah Jesus, "Somebody hath touched me." A single glance of the reviving hope, and strengthening faith, told the poor brother that in his sad condition he himself was included in that blessed word—that, undone as he had appeared to be, he had touched the Lord! Astonishing conclusion! "What!" said he, "*I, poor I, unworthy rebel that I am, I, that somebody?* I, that am less than *nothing*, declared to be *somebody*—and that somebody that hath touched the Lord of glory?" Yes, it was even so, the *power*, the *life*; the warm, dissolving effects of the gracious words were enough to crush every doubt—had any arisen—that the word was as truly spoken respecting our poor brother, as it was respecting the woman in the gospel. But what did the word spoken convey? simply that the Lord had been "touched?" Ah, bless his glorious royal bounty! truly, without impiety may it be said of him,

"His bounty's boundless as the sea; his love
As deep; the more he gives to thee, the more
He has: for both are infinite!"

When he comes to one of his own travelling children with a "word in season," it is never an *empty* word. His words are not shadows; ah, no! but a blessed *substance*; "*Thy words were found, and I did eat them;*" "*Mau shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God*" (Matt. iv. 4); "*How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good; that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth*" (Isa. lii. 7). This is the blessed substance of every fresh word brought by the power and unction of the holy testifier of Jesus to the troubled soul of one of his afflicted children. Hedged in on every side by mountains of difficulty, without any apparent possible way of escape, the bearer of the message of mercy comes "skipping over the mountains;" and when he drops the living words into the heart, be they what they may, or under whatever circumstances, these are the three substantial, blessed testimonies of bounty the gracious words contain—*peace! salvation! thy God reigneth!*

"How can we sink with such a prop,
That bears the world, and all things up?"

Such was the substance of the precious words spoken to our almost shipwrecked brother—"Somebody hath touched me."

For a long time he stood gazing with wonder and love, admiration and gratitude, at the goodness of the Lord—weeping out his exclamation, "*Oh, how good is our God!*" and although he could see no change in his circumstances, yet he could feel

the *peace*, and hold *salvation* from his pressing difficulties sure, because he could say to his soul, "*Thy God reigneth!*" And let the sequel stop the mouth of gainsayers, who would fain write enthusiasm, fanaticism, or superstition, on the simple, *literal* statement of facts. While this poor brother was thus engaged behind the scenes with his God—while he was listening to the promise of help, *at the same moment* the Lord's Cyrus was under the same roof, although unexpected and unknown, working the deliverance of the captive wrestler, so that when the poor brother again appeared, "with his countenance no more sad," he was presented with the weapons by which the violence of the oppressor was converted into the most signal triumph of the oppressed! "Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord" (Ps. cvii. 43). Reader, hast thou some rankling, secret, soul-distressing trouble or anxiety? no matter how small it may appear in the eyes of some, or how great it may be in fact; is it constantly seizing and dismaying thy poor trembling heart? and day by day as thou art travelling onward, surrounded by a thousand mercies, whispering to thee, as each fresh favour is surveyed, "What availeth these, while this Mordecai still sits in the gate?" Fear not, when the sinking moment comes—and not until then—the arm of the Lord shall be seen, and thou shalt *kiss the rod* which led thee in thine extremity to *touch* the Lord. But thou art not to expect him to *acknowledge* the touch until every other refuge has failed; while thou hast a single prop left to lean upon—while thou art able to *touch* this or that fleshly helper—although thou mayest be constantly, according to feeling, pressing through the crowd to touch the Lord too, yet thou art not to expect him to say to thee in the same full manner as he did to our poor brother, "Somebody hath touched me." But if the ways of escape are narrowing—if the props are failing—if the dangers seem multiplying—if all fleshly strengths are rapidly declining—then "*look up!*" Oh, beloved! this precious testimony, in a multitude of astonishing circumstances, is hourly fulfilling, in its lesser sense, in the experience of the Lord's dear family, when there shall be signs in the sun, [dreadful darkness], and in the moon [all things changing], and in the stars [brothers and sisters forsaking each other], and upon earth, distress of nations—with perplexity—the sea and the waves roaring, men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth—for the powers of heaven shall be shaken [*faith* shall be tried]—and *then* shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud, with power and great glory—and when these things begin to come to pass [the terrible things which precede the Lord's coming], then *look up and lift up your heads*, for your redemption draweth

nigh" (Luke xxi. 25—28). The Lord help thee, dear tried one, to calculate rightly in all these depths, and give thee to *believe*, that however much the poor reed may be *bruised*, He to whom the bruised reed is dearer than life itself, will never break it, nor suffer any other power to do so. Indeed, if thou couldest but see to what an immortal support the little frail thing is lashed, thou wouldest laugh at the tempest and the storm, which only drives thee closer to thy *stronghold*, and makes thee "touch" him more intensely. Thou art hedged about with God, beloved. What shall separate you? what can injure you? Cheer up, then, and let us

"Sing as we pass through this valley of tears,
The righteous shall hold on *his* way."

"*Somebody hath touched me.*" There are three particulars connected with this blessed "touch" we desire to dwell upon a little; and then, a fourth view of the text, which must not be forgotten:—

1st.—The peculiar, personal nature of the touch.

2nd.—The reason of the efficacy of the touch.

3rd.—The blessed effects of the touch.

And 4th.—A view of the text, as spoken by the Lord when any of his members are touched by an enemy; "For he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye" (Zech ii. 8).

1st.—The peculiar, personal nature of the touch. *The condition of the poor ruined woman*, in connexion with the words before us, was a distressing one indeed. Unlike the prodigal son, who had spent all his substance in riotous living, this poor creature had spent all her substance in the most laudable manner, in endeavouring to obtain relief from her disease, and yet we find her in no better condition now than when she began, twelve years ago, "but rather worse!" Can we find a parallel case among ourselves? how long have some of us been going on, groaning over the "issue of blood," and seeking by a thousand expedients to get a cure, but, finding to our dismay, the horrible thing will break out again and again? Cannot a poor soul look back, perhaps twice twelve years, and say—

"I thought that in some favour'd hour,
At once he'd answer my request;
And by his love's constraining power
Subdue my sins and give me rest.

"Instead of this!"

Ah, poor tried one, *instead of this, indeed!* What could not thy anguish of spirit tell out, were it lawful? but "the heart knoweth its *own* bitterness." Hast thou any substance left, to pay physicians of no value with? If thou hast—if thou thinkest thou hast any power in thyself to help thyself, or to stay by thy own effort—or by following the rules of this or that great man,

the workings of thy corrupt nature—thou art not yet ready for the tidings this poor woman heard! thou art not *yet* brought to *her condition*, nor wilt thou *yet* obtain her cure. *She had heard of Jesus*, she hears of his wonderful power—she desires to find him; she seeks after him, and in her seeking meets one after another who have received “health and cure” at his hands. Yonder comes one, rejoicing in his sight; “I was blind,” says he, “but this wonderful Jesus made clay with his spittle, put it on my eyes, and behold, I see!” A cleansed leper hurries by her, exclaiming, “He only spake the word, ‘Be thou clean,’ and glory to God, I am restored!” Crippled beggars come leaping towards her, shouting hallelujahs to the praise of God, and talking of the power of Jesus! the dumb-singing of his bounty, “without money and without price!” The deaf stand and listen to the melody of his name, as it mingles with the hosannas of the multitude. She meets the palsied one, who, now standing firmly on his feet, tells her how Jesus said unto him, “Arise, and take up thy bed and walk!” she sees the withered hand that had been made whole! she meets another who had been raised from the dead—and, trembling with emotion, inquires of him where she may find Jesus? and if there is any hope for her now that she has nothing to give for her cure? “See,” says the joyful man, “yonder he comes! *He casts out none!* madmen or dead men, blind or deaf, dumb, or lame, or lepers, or sick—none are too bad, and none too poor! Art thou afraid he will not cure thee? Fear not! think of my case. I was dead! I thought no more of him than did the coffin in which I was being carried to my grave. How could I think of him? I was dead! yet he had compassion on my mother, and on me; though dead, he caused me to hear his voice! though dead I heard him say, ‘*Young man, arise!*’ Awaking from the sleep of death, I ‘began to speak!’ and what shall I talk about, or do henceforth? I will find the afflicted, and the sick, the dying, and the poor, and tell them of this most glorious Christ, and send them all to him. If thou hast any malady, go thou to him—or wait, if thou canst not go, and he will come to thee. See, yonder he comes!” The poor woman stands and gazes at the multitude which throng the Lord as he draws near. See how her anxious eye searches through the crowd for Him. A single glance suffices! *a secret impression* fills her soul with hope—but seeing is not enough; she hears his gracious voice, but hearing is not enough—she must *touch* him. “For she said, If I may touch but his clothes I shall be whole” (Mark v. 28). Yet she is too much ashamed of her condition to venture into his presence; she could not dare to intercept him, and plainly ask him to his face to help her. Ah, no! A sense of unworthiness will make stout hearts quail before the eye of

purity—a sense of unworthiness will make a coward of a hero, when he bows his head before the Lord; and, like the publican, it will make him smite upon his breast as one undone, and cry, “Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner.” No wonder, then, that a poor, disappointed, bankrupt, diseased woman, should choose rather to *creep behind* the Lord of glory in her desire to touch him. Oh, my soul, dost thou not know what this creeping to the foot of the cross is? often and again all *reasonable* ground for hope of help quite gone—but one last resource remaining to be tried?

“When every door seems shut but one,
And that is mercy’s door?”

And who, and what, is that *door*? Even Christ himself—and he is never shut to the helpless, and the feelingly lost. No, bless him! He is ever standing open to be touched. Yes,

“*Touch’d with a sympathy within,
He knows our feeble frame.*”

Come, then, beloved, follow the poor woman into the crowd—see her struggle through the press—at every fresh obstacle exclaiming, “If I may but touch!” Whatever thy necessities may be, however low thou art sunk, however cold, however doubtful—whether thy troubles spring from temporals, or spirituals—though thou art afraid to face the Lord, press on behind him; he knows thou art coming—he hears thy watchword, “If I may but touch,” *virtue* is ready; “He waits to be gracious.” We would say to thee, at every inch of ground thou gainest in the press, FORWARD! FORWARD! Thou shalt soon hear his dear voice, saying, “Somebody hath touched me!”—*Extract from the Cottage Lectures.*

A ROUNDABOUT WAY, BUT RIGHT AT LAST.

MY DEAR SIR,—You will perhaps remember to have received a few lines from me about six months ago; I did hope, ere this, to have had an interview with you, but my courage has failed me; and therefore I beg leave to trouble you with another epistle. I have been considerably discouraged since I have attended Surrey Tabernacle, in hearing the people of God speak of the soul trouble they have passed through while under the law; and I have been led to doubt whether I have experienced the Spirit’s work in my soul. My object, therefore, in writing to you is to narrate briefly my experience, in the hope that the Lord will make me manifest to your conscience, *let me be whatever I may.*

When a child, about nine years of age, I was impressed with the uncertainty of life, and of my awful condition should I be called off the stage of time; I was convinced that hell would

be my portion if I died without a change of heart; and the following passages of Scripture were applied with much force, and abode with me for a length of time;—"For every idle word that man shall speak he must give account at the day of judgment;" "We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ;" "Verily I say unto you, ye shall by no means come out thence till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing." The fear of death and judgment greatly tormented me; and my sins were set in array before me; at times I was thoughtless and lighthearted, but I frequently "groaned, being burdened," and "watered my couch with tears." In this state of mind I lived for five years; and then I was removed from my relatives, and placed with a very worldly family in London; and here I was led into all kinds of pleasure so-called, to which before I had been a stranger. I went to theatres, read novels, sang songs, and did all I could to stifle conscience, but it would cry out sometimes; and then I would promise to give up sin very soon, and become religious; for I believed I could turn to God whenever I pleased. Well, after I had gone on in my sinful course for some time, I became very uneasy about my soul again; so I determined no longer to delay, but to become religious at once; so on one *wet Sunday, as I could not go out*, I set to work, and I began at the beginning of "*Doddridge's Rise and Progress*," tried to pray *his ready-made prayers*, read my Bible, and felt quite pleased with myself at the end of the day, for conducting myself so well. But, alas! before Monday had passed, I was quite tired of my religion; and was very glad to give it up, but I could not rest; again my fears tormented me, and again I resorted to my "*Rise and Progress*," and again I gave it all up as useless. After this, I felt that it was of no use for me to seek for salvation, for I should surely be lost, and I therefore resolved that I would have my fill of sin while I could, for I could but be lost after all; and with this determination I rushed into every scene of temptation, and endeavoured to commit the foulest crimes; but I was prevented by an unseen power, over and over again, and I could not imagine why I could not effect my purposes. And then I was filled with such a loathing against sin that I hated myself on account of it, and every one who openly practised it—but all this time—a period of six years—I was as ignorant of the substitution of Christ as any heathen who never heard his name. On one Lord's day I went out to visit some worldly relatives; I had no uneasiness of mind when I went, but after I had been there a few hours I felt very uneasy, and I felt a strong desire to leave my companions, and go to Dr. Leifchild's chapel; I therefore begged of my friends to excuse me, which they were very unwilling to do, but persuasion had no weight with me, and I therefore started

to walk the distance of three miles ; ah that walk, I shall never forget it ! I had thoughts such as I never had before ; I seemed raised above the world, and I had such a sight of the substitution of Christ, that I really understood what had until then been to me a perfect mystery, viz., how Jesus was the way to heaven. It would be impossible for me to describe my feelings at that time ; a brief statement of facts is all I can give ; I went to chapel, but I do not know that anything I heard was blessed to me ; but my soul was melted down before the cross, and the word of the Lord came unto me saying, " Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world." I hastened home, and shut myself in my chamber, fell on my knees, and was led to pour out my soul before God, pleading the merits of Jesus only for my acceptance and salvation. Oh, what a blessed season of communion with God I then had ! and I felt a peace and joy which I had before been an utter stranger to !—my sins were all gone, and I rejoiced with joy unspeakable. When I arose the next morning, my heart was as light as a feather ; indeed I could scarcely believe myself to be the *same poor burdened* mortal that had been stung with sin for six long years ; ah, how sweet was deliverance to one who had been held so long in captivity ! In this peaceful, happy state of mind I remained for several months, during which time I attended Dr. Leifchild's ministry constantly : I had been brought up by moderate Calvinists, and had never questioned for a moment the truth of their principles. I became a Sunday school teacher, subscribed to various *religious* societies, was a warm advocate for missionary labours, and I used to write letters and hand-bills, which I distributed in order to do my part *towards converting the world*, and very zealous I was until the Lord hid his face, and I was made to see that my old nature was as bad as ever it was, then I found all these things were but empty forms ; my corruptions rose and rebelled, and I could not pray as I had done, neither could I read the word, it was a sealed book to me ; I was astonished at my state of misery, for I had flattered myself that I was growing very holy, and that in a few years I should really be *quite notorious for my piety*. In this state I remained for a length of time, and I gave up my Sunday school, for I could gain no comfort from that quarter. I really believed I was falling from grace, for I had often heard the *Reverend Doctor* speak of Christians falling, and perishing at last ;—one sermon in particular, on this subject, very much distressed me ; I shall never forget the agony of mind I suffered for a week after hearing it ; but, on the following Sunday, a verse of a hymn which was sung at chapel was so blessed to my soul, that I have ever since believed, and rejoiced in the doctrine of the final perseverance of the saints. It was the following :—

"The soul that on Jesus has lean'd for repose
I will not, I will not, desert to its foes;
That soul, though all hell should endeavour to shake,
I'll never—no, never—no, never, forsake!"

And then followed the Saviour's own precious words, "I give unto my sheep eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand." At this time I read Romaine's Treatises on Faith; here I found a covenant, ordered in all things and sure, quite opposed to the miserable conditions and contingencies which I had been taught. Oh, said I, if Romaine was but living, I would go to church or anywhere else to hear him. I was led to see that election was a truth of God, and although the *pious ones* told me it was a *dangerous doctrine*, and one of the *secret things* which we had nothing to do with, I could not help loving the doctrine, and, secret as it was, I could see it, from one end of my Bible to the other, so I found that the moderate Calvinists and the Scriptures could not walk together; because they were not agreed. I saw baptism, not as they practised it, but as the Word of God reveals it, and I was accordingly baptised, although a member of their church.

When I had been united to these workmongers for a year and a half, I was taken by a friend to hear John Stevens; I had never heard a man of truth before, oh, how delighted I was to find the gospel preached, as Romaine preached it! I tasted the old wine of the kingdom, and I no longer desired new, for I found the old was better. The more I heard of free grace the more I loved it, for I had learned, by bitter experience, that nothing but free grace would suit such a poor, empty, helpless wretch as I was, for my supposed good works had become as loathsome to me as my bad ones; so that I was quite convinced that if Christ did not *do everything* for me and in me, I must be lost eternally; so having found the pastures, where the good Shepherd fed his flock, I took up my abode there, and fed among the sheep for five years, under that dear under-shepherd, now in glory, John Stevens. I might go on to speak of my path, since the Lord led me into the truth; but I should be tedious. I have been stung with sin again and again, but I have truly found that the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin, and it never loses its power; and I can say, in truth, that the longer I live, the more do I feel my need of a full Saviour, and the more do I value his precious blood; much of my path I travel in the dark, and often have to say, "He standeth behind our wall;" but, blessed be the Lord, in darkness as well as in light he keeps me still in love with his truth. I took up no doctrine as a mere notion, neither can I give up any without giving up my experience also. I have loved the truth nearly eight years, and am quite sure I love it more now than ever

I did, and I believe I shall love it more yet before I die. Thus have I given a short account of the Lord's dealings with me ; what I have written is *my own experience, and not another's* ; God forbid that I should boast in another man's line of things. I have been rather uneasy, because I can find none of the Lord's people who were led in a similar manner to know their lost condition. Will you therefore send me a few lines, just to say whether this is the experience of God's children, and whether I may venture to give in such an experience to the church, for *I can give no other*, and I am desirous of joining, because your ministry has been blessed to my soul, and I can hear no one else so well. I trust, dear Sir, you will excuse the great liberty I have taken, and favour me with a reply, and you will thus oblige,

Yours affectionately in the Lord,
A. L. E.

THE GLORIES OF ZION.

CANTO I.

Her origin, situation, and security. Her foundation, walls, and gates.

AWAKE, lute and harp ! wake each heavenly string !
Instruct me, thou SPIRIT supreme !
That I of the glories of Zion may sing,
In strains all sublime as my theme.

For who is sufficient the half to make known,
Or speak of such rapturous things ?
Not the brightest archangel that sits near the throne,
Nor the saint that in Paradise sings.

Oh, Zion ! fair city of heaven's great King,
His dear and delightful abode !
How shall I thy glory harmoniously sing ?
Thou seat of my Saviour and God !

If thee I prefer not above my chief joy,
Or of thee e'er forgetful I prove,
Let my tongue and my harp find no more sweet employ,
Nor my hand o'er the strings again move.

Within thy fair walls and thy palaces, still
May peace and prosperity reign !
For there the dear saints, the earth's excellent, dwell,
And there was my soul born again.

What glories, oh, Zion ! of thee are declared !
Tyre and Egypt have heard of thy fame ;
But Egypt and Tyre, when with thee compared,
No beauty or grandeur can claim.
Far as Ethiopia thy fame doth extend,
She spreads forth her hands in thy praise !
Thy glories famed Babylon's wonders transcend,
Thee nations behold with amaze.
Her form on the mind of Jehovah was drawn,
Ere creation arose in its prime :
Thou, Zion ! art she who serene as the dawn
Looked forth in the morning of time.
He chose her as pure : when in Adam she fell,
His purpose then saved her alone ;
He saw in what parts of the earth she would dwell,
And the day he would make his love known.
In the Spirit's mild graces she looks like the moon,
As through the dark clouds she is borne :
She is bright as the sun when high riding at noon,
Of when splendours his rising adorn.
Tremendous is she, in her militant state,
As an army with banners unfurl'd ;
In the midst of her foes she stands fearless and great,
The wonder and dread of the world !
Fair Zion's a city of ancient renown,
Whose fame is reported abroad,
With walls, and foundations, and riches unknown ;
Her builder and maker is God.
In sweet situation, the joy of the earth,
She, high on an eminence, stands ;
And, fix'd on a mount in the sides of the north,
A beautiful prospect commands.
For honour and wealth she all other excels,
Grace, grandeur, and strength she combines :
In her, the perfection of beauty, God dwells,
And thence all refulgently shines.
The river of grace, from the ocean of love,
Rolls in Zion its gladdening streams ;
And light, from the fountain of glory above,
Sheds o'er her its soul-cheering beams.
The fair tabernacle of God the most high !
The mount of the Lord's holiness !
His glorious presence doth her sanctify,
There he sheds the brightest beams of his grace.

A bright crown of glory is she, in his hands,
A rich royal diadem she ;
A city sought out of all countries and lands,
That never forsaken shall be.

Oh, say can a woman her suckling forget ?
Or the child of her womb cease to love ?
She may ; yet the Lord will not Zion,—nor let
His faithfulness from her remove.

Before him her walls shall eternally stand,
When the hills and the mountains depart :
Loved Zion is graved on the palm of his hand,
And her name is inscribed on his heart.

The Father loved Zion ; her he gave to his Son ;
And, when through transgression she fell,
Emmanuel redeem'd her with blood of his own,
And raised her in heaven to dwell.

By gift and by purchase she doubly is his,
By conquest, too, she is his own :
The Spirit, in compact, revealed the bliss,
To Zion these wonders made known.

The triune Jehovah, the eternal Three,
In covenant transaction engage,
The city's defence and salvation to be,
And her glory, in every age.

When God first intended the walls should be rear'd,
He made his good pleasure the rule ;
No hammer of works in the building was heard,
Nor of human invention the tool.

His infinite wisdom drew out the design,
His power executed it through ;
Strict justice and judgment he laid to the line,
And squared it in righteousness true.

Her glorious foundations with sapphires are laid ;
Jehovah's power, wisdom, and grace,
And mercy, and truth, and compassion are made
The city's immovable base.

God's counsel and oath, an immutable bond,
A strong consolation afford,
That, fix'd on his truth, her foundation shall stand,
Till Jehovah can forfeit his word.

Built on his perfections of justice and grace,
That like mountains of adamant stand,
What power can her heavenly foundations erase,
Or storm the place out of his hand ?

Christ's person and suffering, his blood for her spilt,
And pleadings within the high vail,
Stand firm as a rock, on which Zion is built,
Nor shall Satan against her prevail.

Go, walk around Zion, and count all her towers,
Her walls and her bulwarks mark well !
Salvation for walls and for bulwarks appears,
To shield from the malice of hell.

She's a city compact, and her buildings well form'd !
The stones, fitly framed and close join'd,
Hewn out in God's will, as by sin not deform'd,
Are fix'd in the place he design'd.

Not all the artillery that earth and hell send,
Shall one of the stones e'er displace ;
Nor clouds of corruptions, that round her ascend,
Their beautiful polish deface.

A wall of bright fire doth the city enclose,
Resisting each foe's fiery dart ;
And God, in her midst, doth the glory compose,
That from Zion shall never depart.

True watchmen are set on her walls all around,
In Zion to blow the alarm ;
They their trumpets of silver with certainty sound,
That Zion to battle may arm.

Her watchmen are all of celestial birth ;
To God they all lift up their voice,
Until he make Zion a praise in the earth,
And Salem aloud to rejoice ;

Till the glory of God on his Zion arise,
And her righteousness go forth as the light,
And till her salvation's reveal'd to their eyes,
As a lamp, that burns steady and bright.

Jehovah, whose eyes neither slumber nor sleep,
Around her a watch doth maintain ;
By night and by day he the city doth keep,
The watchmen else wake but in vain.

The kings of the earth her assembled around,
And gazed on the walls he had rear'd ;
They saw it, and marvelled, and fled at the sound,
When the voice of his thunder they heard.

Her gates, all of praise, there in beauty excel ;
Her converts there patiently wait ;
In her no exactors of violence dwell,
To oppress Zion's poor in the gate.

There the righteous acts of the Lord they retrace,
 Who go forth to draw water with joy ;
 And are saved from the archers that frequent the place,
 And seek Zion's sons to annoy.

LETTER FROM TIMOTHY.

"Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm."—PSALM cv. 14.

THE above words of the psalmist are not much regarded in the present day, as there are many persecutors of the Lord's prophets and people, who, like Saul of Tarsus, think they are doing God service in persecuting his own elect family, slandering them, reproaching them, backbiting them, vilifying them, saying all manner of evil against them, falsely; and what for? to please their own persecuting spirit, being set on by the devil and their own malicious heart; and, like the Roman emperors, with their sword of human invention, endeavour to extirpate the Lord's people from off the face of the earth: but he suffered no man to do them wrong, and reprov'd kings for their sake, saying, "Touch not mine anointed." We read in the gospel of the poor woman saying, "If I can but touch the hem of his garment I shall be made whole again," and many sought to touch him, for there went virtue out of him, and as many as touched him were made whole. These touched him that they might be cleansed from their sin, feeling themselves lost and undone.

We notice, first, who are the Lord's anointed; those whom God the Father hath chosen in God the Son, and sanctified by God the Holy Ghost, from before the foundation of the world; them that are born again of the Spirit, who are dead to the world, dead to sin, and dead to meritorious works and all creature goodness. Paul says, "For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God," and in this sense of the word, neither sin nor Satan can get at them, they are jewels that adorn the crown of the King of kings. He is the anointed one, being anointed with fresh oil, with the oil of joy above his fellows. He is anointed to bring the prisoners out of the prison, &c. Read Isaiah lxi. and Luke iv.; here you have the prophecy, and the fulfilment of that prophecy, and the Lord Jesus Christ being anointed, all his members are anointed with and in him. They are not to be touched to injure them, for he that toucheth you *maliciously* toucheth me, and he that toucheth me toucheth the apple of mine eye; therefore, whosoever shall offend one of these little ones, *in the world's esteem*, it were better for him

that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the midst of the sea.

Therefore, christian reader, do not think these are light and trifling things to persecute the people of God either by word or deed, for there is nothing passes unnoticed before God, and such measure as you mete out to others shall be measured to you again. The Lord has said, "Blessed are ye when men shall say all manner of evil against you falsely. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven;" and I am a living witness of the above words, and can testify to the truth of them, having had several false accusations laid against me that could not be proved, the Lord blessing me under them, and I hope I shall ascribe all the glory to him. "Do my prophets no harm." Who are the prophets?—the ministers of Jesus Christ, who are sent by him under the sweet influences of the Holy Spirit, to preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ. Those that can say feelingly, "Woe is me if I preach not the gospel;" them that go forth to preach the gospel to every creature, being no respecter of persons, seeking to glorify God, not to please men, telling them God has loved a people from everlasting, Christ has redeemed them for ever from the curse of the law, and they are sanctified by the Holy Ghost, and made meet to be partakers of the divine nature of Christ; telling them their own righteousnesses are nothing but filthy rags, but Christ has wrought out a complete robe of righteousness to all and upon all those that believe. Do them no harm by word or action, nor by misrepresentation, calling them Antinomians, narrow-minded bigots, for Christ takes it as done to himself. Against an elder receive not an accusation. I remember soon after my father was called to the work of the ministry, an ungodly man reproached him, saying, "You go and preach, and I'll come and contradict you," or similar words, which had a tendency to hurt his mind; but, awful to relate, instead of going to withstand the Lord's servant, he was seized the next day, or day following, with brain fever, and, if I mistake not, by the next sabbath day he was summoned to meet his Judge, to give an account of the deeds done in the body; dying, to all appearance, without hope, and without God in the world, deprived of his reasoning faculties, and died in a state of insanity, proving the word of God to be immutable. Therefore, dear reader, meditate upon these things, and ask yourself the important question, "whether you are rejoicing with those that rejoice, and weeping with those that weep?" If not, you give but little proof of being one of the Lord's people. I write these few lines in a way of caution and exhortation to some of your readers, and still remain your own son in the faith,

T. W., April 11, 1848.

TIMOTHY.

ENQUIRY UPON MATT. xi. 11, 12.

Messrs. Editors,—If you or one of your correspondents could offer your thoughts on the clauses of the 11th and 12th verses of the 11th chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel, you would much oblige a friend and constant reader of your Ambassador.

London, April 11, 1848.

J. G.

REPLY TO THE ABOVE.

The above enquiry appears to us to embrace three distinct points :—

1. Why is it said *there hath not risen a greater than John?*

Answer. Not only because his birth was specifically announced from heaven, as were those of Isaac, Samson, and Samuel, *but* he was so early a partaker of the Holy Ghost, that he leaped for joy before he was born.

Second. Because he was honoured with special and personal predictions, Isa. xl.; Mal. iii. 1, 4, 5, 6, and to which predictions he strikingly and accurately answered. Does Isa. xl. set him forth as testifying that all flesh is as grass, that every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, the crooked be made straight, and the rough places plain? So the New Testament brings John the Baptist before us in the exact position prediction placed him, Matt. iii.; John iii. 27, thus showing unto us that the Scriptures cannot be broken.

But not only was he pre-eminently honoured with the Holy Ghost, and proved in his position, character, and ministry, in exact accordance with prediction, but he was, as it were, the forerunner, the introducer, of the Lord Jesus to the world, in his there and then personal presence on earth, an honour which no other prophet had; he also baptized the Saviour, honour which none other could have. Add to this his deadness to the world, his consecrated and entire devotion to God, and his extensive usefulness, all going to show that there had not been a greater than John; showing us also that all real good, real greatness, and real peace and glory, are, after all, found nowhere but in close fellowship with, and earnest following after God and godliness.

But, 2ndly. Why is it said that *he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he?*

Now, if the words, *kingdom of heaven*, here mean the kingdom of glory above, then there is no difficulty, as far as *comparison* is concerned, in understanding the words; for no

doubt a glorified saint is greater in heaven than the most renowned prophet could be while on earth; but then if we admit the words, *kingdom of heaven*, as here used, to refer to future glory, then we at once admit the doctrine of degrees in glory, for the words, *least in the kingdom*, certainly imply degrees, at least, of greatness; but such a doctrine as this is contrary to the Scriptures, which testify that all are one in Christ, and that that which is in part shall be done away, when that which is perfect is come, and that *all* shall come to the fulness of the stature of a man in Christ, that while, as one star differeth from another star in brightness, so is the future as compared with our present state, but in heaven we know of no difference. John saw no difference in those he saw before the throne, nor any difference in their voice of praise to God; nor does Paul describe any difference among them, but suggests rather the contrary, when he calls them the spirits of just men made perfect. If, then, the words, *kingdom of heaven*, here in Matt. xi. 11, do *not* mean, as it seems to us they do not mean, the kingdom of glory, then it follows that they must mean the kingdom of heaven, as established in this world; but even this view is not without its difficulties, for how can it be made to appear that the least Christian, the least babe in grace, is *greater* than John the Baptist? We confess we are utterly at a loss how to make this out; so far, indeed, that we shall not attempt it, but shall seek for the meaning in some other direction.

Our *opinion* is, and it is but an opinion, that the meaning must be sought in the *ministerial office* of John; he is in verse the ninth called a prophet; yea, and *more* than a prophet. Connect the word prophet with the words in verse eleventh, and it will read thus, That there hath not risen a greater *prophet* than John. Notwithstanding, the least (prophet) in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he, it appears that the comparison must be confined to the apostles, and then it will mean, that the least of the apostles (of course we do not reckon Judas Iscariot) was in commission greater than John the Baptist. John's labours lasted not many years, and were also confined chiefly to Palestine, but the commission of the apostles, while it was to begin at Jerusalem, ran over Judea and Samaria; it was also to range over all the known world. While, then, there had not risen a prophet greater in the honour put upon him, yet that the least apostle was greater in commission. John did no miracle, but all things that John spake of this man were *true*.

3rdly. Why is it said that the kingdom of heaven *suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force*?

Now we are aware that some have said, that the violence here

means holy violence; that the Christian, by, as it were, violent prayer, takes heaven by force; but as the Saviour did no violence, and as his people are to be followers of him, and as they are neither to hurt nor destroy in all his holy mountain, as violence is not to be heard in the city of God, wasting nor destruction within its borders, but as the walls are to be (to the people of God) salvation, and the gates praise, and as there is to be by the people of God no breaking in or going out, as great is to be their peace: is it not *contrary to the general drift and tone* of Scripture to represent the kingdom of heaven as suffering violence by the prayers, entreaties, and pleadings of the saints? are they not spoken of as waiting at wisdom's gates, as watching at the posts of her doors? and though there be a striving to enter in at the strait gate, and a most determined pressing forward for the prize, yet it does not seem to us that it can be said that in this, either that the kingdom of heaven suffereth *violence*, or is taken by *force*; yet some are so accustomed to view it in this light, that we have little hope of saying anything tending to move them from the position from which they have been in the habit of looking at this scripture, the real and right meaning of which appears to us to be, that the kingdom of heaven here includes the Saviour, his people, his truth, and ordinances; and was he not enclosed by the assembly of the wicked? did they not deal with him violently? and while he himself had done no violence, did he not yet suffer violence, and did not the violent take him by force, and that to slay him and cast him out, hoping hereby to put an entire end to him? but he rose again, and though Judas said, This is he, *hold him fast*, yet this precept they were not able to obey; the pains of death were loosed or worn out, there was not one pain left, therefore death could not hold him.

Again, have not thousands of the Lord's people suffered violence, and have been taken by force? yet all that the enemy could do was to kill the body, so that the triumph of the wicked is but for a moment, upon which truth is founded the consoling exhortation, "Fear not them which kill the body, but *after that* there is no more that they can do; but fear him which is able to cast both body and soul into hell, I say unto you, Fear him."

Again, have not the truth and ordinances of God suffered violence, and have not the violent taken them by force, has not believers' baptism been turned into infant sprinkling, and have not the bread and wine been made to stand in the place of Christ Jesus and his salvation? and what one truth of his word has not suffered violence, and the violent have taken the same by force, though the time is coming when these offenders will be cast out, and the kingdom of God, which they have *taken by force*, shall be taken from them, but unto his *own* the

Lord saith, Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

As the dispensation of mercy was no sooner introduced than Cain did violence to the same, and as the Mosaic economy was no sooner brought in but it suffered violence, so no sooner is the Saviour's birth proclaimed than the wrath of man seeks his destruction, and reeks its vengeance on Bethlehem's little children; but the voice of those little children is heard on high (Rama means high), and though they suffered violence, and the violent took them by force, yet they in the best sense escaped the enemy and avenger, for they departed to be with the Lord. Here, then, again the enemy's hold of them was but temporary, and from the days of John the Baptist unto this day, the (New Testament) kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent taketh it by force, that is, unlawfully, but that which they seem to have shall be taken from them.

In conclusion, we just observe, that the word in the parallel passage, Luke xvi. 16, translated *presseth*, is the same in the original as in Matt. xi., and conveys the same meaning of *force*, *assault*, and *violence*.

Thus there hath not risen a greater prophet than John, yet the least of the apostles had a more enlarged commission than he.

And thus the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force, but will not be able to keep it, but the time shall come when the saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever and ever.

Eds.

LETTER FROM JOHN WARBURTON.

Trowbridge, February 6, 1816.

DEAR BROTHER,—I received your welcome epistle, but was quite astonished that you did not know whether you or I had wrote the last, as it was the first letter you sent me, and it was so long in coming that I really thought you had quite forgot me; but when it arrived and its contents, it set all to rights, and ancient times came fresh to my mind of the many precious moments we have had together in times that are past; and truly I have had many hearty laughs and many a hearty cry in reading the letter—you and your voyage to the Isle of Man, I understood it very well, for I have been there myself, not often a pleasuring, but very often for help; but it is a miserable place to go to for help. God is determined that his saints shall never confide long in flesh and blood, nor glory in another short of himself, both as a God of providence and grace; and sure I am

before this is the case all fleshly confidence must be broken to pieces, and every human refuge rooted up, and every earthly good blasted, and all our rags torn off the back, and every bone broken to pieces, and scattered at the grave's mouth, and these things are not done without feeling it, and feeling it with a witness, too; I have known what it is to be here, both in providence and grace. For the body and matters respecting the soul I shall never forget some scenes of this nature that I have passed through. Every refuge failed me; God hiding his face; a throne of grace blocked up, the devil roaring, unbelief shouting, The Lord is clean gone for ever, and will be favourable no more for ever, despair, threatening, death, destruction, damnation, and wrath, the soul cut into a thousand pieces, crying out, My soul chooseth strangling and death rather than life! Oh that God would hear my cry, that he would let loose his hand and cut me off, for he has removed my soul far off from peace; I forgot prosperity, and I said, My hope and strength are perished from the Lord. Oh that my grief were thoroughly weighed, and my calamity weighed in balances together, for now it would be heavier than the sand of the sea; therefore, my words are swallowed up. Ah, my brother, there are but few professors that can enter into these exercises, lifting the soul when he has missed it, exhorting him to act faith upon the promises of God, has no more joyful sound in it to such a soul than the braying of an ass; for he knows there is as much hope of deliverance from the grunt of a pig as there is from anything he can do or perform: here he is and here he must be, and neither can get forward nor backward, nor move hand nor foot, till his God comes; and what a wonderful God he is, that neither lust nor pride, envy, unbelief, hard-heartedness, presumption, blasphemy, and ungodliness of all descriptions, that ever was in hell or out of hell, can break his covenant of peace, drown the soul, nor change the word of truth into a lie, nor strip Christ of his jewels, nor render his blood inefficacious, nor conquer omnipotence, nor ever be able to make void his oath, nor alter our promise of his grace. Oh bless his dear name, when he shows his lovely face, makes bare his glorious arm, discovers his majesty and glory, as a God gracious, full of mercy and truth, unfolds the mysteries of his love, in the gift, in the life, death, burial, resurrection, ascension, and intercession of the Lord Jesus Christ, and a witnessing in the conscience by the Holy Ghost that Christ is mine and I am his, in all his characters, offices, and relationship,—this brings peace and gladness into the soul, and nothing else will; and it is such peace and gladness as none know but those that have entered into it by heartfelt experience. What solemn pleasure there is in viewing the sovereignty of his God in his eternal purpose of grace that

was fixed upon him before the world began! how amazingly lost in wonder, adoration, and praise, is he in viewing the everlasting love of his God, which has heights in it without a top, depths without a bottom, breadths without a side, lengths without an end! How his soul is entertained in viewing the matchless power of his God! here he sees angels, men, and devils, under his wise control, and not a single being can move without his sovereign authority. How secretly is his soul delighted in viewing the glorious wisdom of his God in the creation of the world, the formation of man, in every act of providence, in every up and down, in and out; he has had not one voyage to the Isle of Man, nor a single uproar there, nor a being forced to be put to sea again, nor one single storm that happens at sea, with all the dreadful fears of going to the bottom, nor one single voyage to the Cape of Good Hope, nor even the orders to be put to sea again, nor one blow from an Assyrian frigate, nor a single drill we have, nor one moment in the guardhouse, nor a single troop of Philistines that come upon us,—but in the wisdom of God we see it straight and right! . But in our Elder Brother what matchless glories of *wisdom* are seen, as our Rock, Refuge, Hiding-place, Righteousness, Captain, Shield, Buckler, Horn of our salvation, Light, Life, Peace—nay, not one single character he bears but what wisdom shines in such divine glory that it completely baffles all the counsels of hell, and completely silences carnal reason, unbelief, and despair. But what infinite pleasure, joy, and satisfaction, he has in viewing the mercy of his God! Here he is lost in wonder, adoration, praise, and thanksgiving, saying, Let Israel hope in the Lord, for with the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption. How amazingly lost in wonder he is in viewing the faithfulness of his God in his covenant promises and oath! not one promise has ever failed, notwithstanding all his unbelief! He knows what Paul meant when he declared, Though we believe not, yet he abideth faithful, he cannot deny himself. I know of no victory that overcometh the world but a faith's view of these things; and I know that a faith's view of these things is “not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts!” Dear brother, what a mercy it is we have such a God, that is unchangeable in all his engagements, so suited to all necessities, and so infinite in all his boundless goodness to supply all our needs! and though his ways are sometimes in the whirlwind, and his footsteps in the great deep, so that at times we cannot trace them, yet it is all in infinite goodness to teach us more of our folly, ignorance, weakness, and dependence on Him whose promises are all yea and amen in Christ Jesus, and to strip us more from self, and crumble us down at his blessed feet; and how delightful it is to hear his

gracious words, what peace and comfort flow from his blessed lips! Well might the church say, "His mouth is most sweet, yea, he is altogether lovely." My very soul desires you may be kept very close at his feet; I know that nature does not like it, it is quite opposed to it in every sense of the word whatever. But thanks be to God, grace shall reign through righteousness unto eternal life, through Christ Jesus our Lord; and I can say at times I feel its power in subduing the old man of sin, and exalting Christ in my soul the hope of glory; and I can assure you I am as wretched an old man as ever, and as full of enmity against God as ever, and sometimes I think ten times worse than ever, so that I daily need fresh supplies from God; and, thanks be to God, he does supply me. I very often think of you, with all the friends, of the sweet moments we have had, together with the many kindnesses I have had from you in temporal things in my distresses. As it respects the church at Trowbridge we are very comfortable and happy together; the longer I am with them the better they seem satisfied; and I am quite satisfied the Lord has brought me here for his own glory. We have had thirty added to the church since I came, and more are coming, and I believe they are such as are born of God. We are still as crowded as ever in the congregation. But there is strange work among the *Fullerites* all round the country; there has been a separation at one place, so that they are all up in arms, and what the end of it will be I know not; sometimes I tremble till my very joints loosen for fear the Lord will leave me. O how my soul trembles at times when I am led to see the majesty of God, and my own ignorance and unfitness for such a solemn work! I often think of the poet,—

"He calls the fool and makes him know
The mysteries of his grace,
To bring aspiring wisdom low,
And all its pride abase."

Tell Mr. Gadsby I received his letter, and was glad in my heart to read it, and I will send him a letter as soon as I can; but I am so much from home, and sometimes so much engaged when I am at home, that of late I cannot write. Give my kind love to all the friends whom I love in the Lord. Oh, how I should like to see you all! I can assure you I am with you in spirit hundreds of times; I shall never forget your friendship, kindness, love, and affection to me in all my distresses; may the Lord reward you an hundredfold, and that you may be ever kept by the mighty power of God, through faith unto salvation, is the prayer of yours in love,

JOHN WARBURTON.

LETTER TO THE EDITORS.

ESTEEMED AND BELOVED FRIENDS,—I shall be much obliged if you, or some of your able correspondents, will answer me an important question (for I have been much exercised with it), which is as follows. I wish to ask you whether a child of God after regeneration is under the law of responsibility to God ; for I do hear some ministers say that a child of God is responsible to God after called by grace, and they say a child of God is a compound creature, and so it comes to pass these ministers preach a *compound* gospel,—*works* and grace, but they preach the works *first*, and then *I shall have the blessing*. But I think this is not the gospel of Christ. Do you think it is? for I can work the best when I get the *blessing first*. I must say that if a child of God is responsible, and Christ has not done away with that responsibility, I can't see how a poor sinner like me can be saved, for I find from experience that the *thought* of evil is sin, and he that *looks* on a woman, and he that is angry with his brother without a cause, is a *murderer*. I do assure you, friend editors, that it is an important question with me what will become of me if Christ has not been responsible for me, for I am an internal sinner ; and it appears to me in the word of God, that God accepts the will for the deed ; and I think that God condemns in his word for the thought of sin with more severity than for the action ; for God says, he that is angry with his brother without a cause is a murderer ; so it appears that I have no need to commit a murder to be one, for anger makes us one ; and I must say, to conclude, oh, the sinfulness of my poor wicked heart ! and if I am to be responsible for what is within, or for what *comes out*, I shall be lost, and that justly. I wonder if ever any of these compound preachers get into any of these troubles? I think if they did they would want a free salvation, not a salvation made up of law and gospel ; I do assure you, sirs, that I am such a great sinner that I want a great, a free salvation, and I want it independent of either good self or bad self.

I shall be much obliged to the editors if they will give me their thoughts on the above subject, namely, whether a child of God, after regeneration, is under the law of responsibility to God?

AN INQUIRER AFTER TRUTH.

Manchester, April 8, 1848.

ANSWER TO THE ABOVE.

OUR correspondent has in the above introduced, besides his main question, *two other points* of great importance. Namely,

that some preach a gospel of *works and grace*; and also, that sin in thought is not only as bad but *worse* than sin in action.

We will dismiss these two points before proceeding to the question of responsibility.

Now, as to a gospel of works and grace; it certainly must be a weak, lifeless gospel which does not, when rightly received, separate a man from the world, set his affections on things above, make him a sincere seeker after salvation, cause him to love the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob, and lead him into a determined war with all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, setting up the fear of God before the eyes, constraining with holy willingness to walk in wisdom's ways, and to feel that the merchandise of this heavenly wisdom is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold, leading into a spirit, and into acts of love to the brethren, so that it may at the last day be said unto them, "I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat, and was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in." And though a sense of their many sins and infirmities make them forget that they ever did do acts of kindness to the brethren, yet the Lord will not forget their works of faith and labours of love, but will say unto them, "Inasmuch as ye did it unto the least of these my brethren, ye did it unto me."

If this be the gospel our correspondent is pleased to call a gospel of works and grace, we then must confess we are advocates for such a gospel, and satisfied are we that a gospel which does not produce these things is not the gospel of God.

Is our correspondent *sure* that he does not *misrepresent* the ministers to whom he alludes, is he *sure* they turn the tree of truth *upside down*? Is he *sure* he does in this matter judge righteous judgment, knowing well, "what judgment ye judge it shall be judged to you again?"

But let us look at the next item; *sin in thought is as bad as sin in action*.

That nature is altogether corrupt every one taught of God knows right well; and indeed herein lies the plague, the sore, the grief, the burden, the misery, the deformity, the decrepitude, the utter helplessness of the creature in things spiritual and eternal. No right-minded man can deny this, and that an *outward* act is not essential to make a man a liar, a thief, or a murderer, or anything else that the law and word of God prohibits and condemns, is an awful truth beyond dispute. He that is angry unjustly with his brother is a murderer; and that these inward sins are recognised by the law of God, and bring a sinner in guilty, and corrupt, and ruined, before God, is a truth everywhere shown in the word of God. The testimony of God is that the heart of man in its imaginations is evil and

only evil, and that *continually*; so that there is none righteous, no, not one. And if it were possible for any man to live morally or outwardly blameless and sinless, as Saul of Tarsus seems to have supposed he had, yet, when such an one comes to be taken in hand by the Judge of all, and to be turned inside out, and all the goings on of the heart brought to light, such an one would appear in his *nature* just as evil, filthy, guilty, black, and abominable before God as the most abandoned mortal that ever walked the earth; their supposed blameless life would be no atonement for the sins of their hearts; nor could their outward show of good be a remedy for their inward evil: in a word, their mouths would be stopped, and must, for aught anything they can do, be eternally lost: grace alone could be their way of escape. Sin is sin, and, whether it be found in heart or in life, its *wages is death*. Sin in the *nature* of it is certainly as *bad in thought* as it is in *act*; just as bad: there can be no difference. Sin is the transgression of the law; and every *evil thought* is a transgression of the law; and he that offendeth in one point is guilty of the whole. Now, if this be true, which it certainly is, for it is God's own word, may we not then here, as speaking after the manner of men, ask are not the iniquities (numerically) of every one infinite? thus sin in the *nature* of it is as bad in thought as in act, because sin is sin.

But is it when *confined to thought* as bad nationally, socially, and morally? That, while in its *nature* it is as bad in the heart as when it appears in the life, yet the *magnitude* thereof is another thing. We read of some whose sin was very great; and we are aware that the sin of every one is very great, but not in the sense there intended. If, therefore, sin in action be only adding in magnitude to the sin of the heart, then it follows that outward sin is adding sin to sin; and is correspondingly provoking to the Most High. Was it not for this adding of outward to inward sin that a world was sunk into the silence of death, that the cities of the plain were consumed by avenging of fire? in a word, have not all the dreadful judgments recorded in the Bible been ministered because of this adding of outward to that of inward sin?

We cannot but express our surprise that any man pretending to a vital knowledge of the truth should raise a question upon such a subject, because while it is a matter so weighty, it is yet so very clearly revealed in the word, clearly demonstrated in the world, and felt beyond question in the conscience of every one who is born of God; so evident, then, is the truth, that while sin is sin, and in the *nature* of it as bad in one place as in another, yet the magnitude and *aggravating* character of its doings are another thing; and who does not see that a serpent is a serpent, and a bear is a bear, whether chained up, or

whether set free; but who in his senses would wish these among human beings to have their freedom? Will our correspondent contend that it is as bad to have the lion chained up as to have him set free? Let the question speak for itself.

In conclusion, we come to the main point of our correspondent's question, upon which we think we need not at present say much.

The question is, *is a child of God, after regeneration, under the law of responsibility to God?*

We answer, that in the *penal* and *legal* sense, he is *not*. The Lord Jesus, having taken all *penal*, *legal*, and salvation responsibility upon himself; he is the *end* of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth that the believer is dead to the law, but alive unto God, by the Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. The Lord Jesus was also made sin, and made a curse, having redeemed his own from the curse of the law, so that there is no more curse. The Saviour also is the surety of the new covenant, and stands engaged to see that not *one* of his sheep perish. The believer stands under no responsibility that can bring him into *condemnation*, for there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. Stand fast, therefore, saith the apostle, in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again in the yoke of bondage.

But does this freedom mean a *lawless* freedom? If the Lord draw his people as with the cords of love and bands of a man, and is unto them as he that taketh the yoke off their jaws, and layeth meat unto them, does it follow that because they are released from the heavy burden of sin, and hard labour of the law, that therefore they are *not* to take the Saviour's yoke upon them, that they are not to be united to him, nor to learn of him, nor to find his yoke easy and his burden light? We do not wish to insinuate that our correspondent would carry his view of freedom to such an extent as this, but we are not without our fears upon this matter. The believer, then, as we have shown, is not under the law, and, therefore, cannot in the law sense be responsible, because the surety of the new, of the better covenant, releases the believer from this; he is, as we have said, under no law of responsibility that can bring him into condemnation, but he is under a responsibility, the deviation from which may bring him into great *tribulation*; so the word of God shows us in the cases of David, Solomon, the Corinthians, and many others, and so every Christian has found it.

Were not prophets and apostles put in trust, as ministers of the word, with the gospel, and did they not all feel that they were responsible to God in the faithful fulfilling of their office?

if not, why was one man of God slain by a lion, and another severely reprov'd by the apostle Paul? And if Christians be not, in the gospel sense, responsible to God, then how is it their sins, daily, more or less, bring them into inward, and sometimes into outward trouble?

This matter is so plain, that he may run that readeth. Has then our responsibility to God, in the law sense, involved us in *condemnation*? Our responsibility, in the gospel sense, involves us, when deviated from, not indeed in condemnation, but in *tribulation*; he chasteneth and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth, so that a believer's conscience can be easy, and his mind comfortable, only in conformity to the gospel of the blessed God.

And why should we wish to get rid of this gospel responsibility? is it not a most wholesome law, made to operate *solely for our good*, that we may be the more largely partakers of his holiness? Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth; therefore, despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty.

If our correspondent be acting in the fear of God he will not make a man an offender for a word. We mention this, because he seems to play upon the word *compound*, which he has heard a minister use. The meaning evidently was, that while a Christian is a righteous man, yet that he is also a sinful man, and that every act done, whether good or bad, is a *personal* act, and for which the Christian is responsible to God—not, as we have observed, in the law sense, but in the gospel sense of the word. What then does our correspondent expect to gain by wresting another man's words? such glorying is not good, such contention is best left off before it be meddled with.

As our correspondent seems to acknowledge responsibility of *no kind*, we should like to know whether he considers gospel liberty to consist in *lawlessness*, and whether the old man of sin is to roam at large and be responsible for nothing?

It was so in the Old Testament age, that if a man had an ox that was *wont to push* with his horns, and let the same run free, if such an unruly ox destroyed life, then both the ox and the owner were to be put to death.

Now, if our correspondent be sure that this old man of sin be *not* accustomed to push with his horns, that he is *not* accustomed to do *evil*, that he is in all his qualities and habits *perfectly harmless*, then indeed we need not wish to see this wild bull entangled in a net.

Ens.

April 21, 1848.

GOSPEL BLESSING.

"As the eye of a man to the hand of his master, and as the eye of a maid to the hand of her mistress," so the sinner's eye waits upon God, until he hath mercy upon him.

His face being Zion-ward, Zion-ward he looks, for "out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God shines;" and into the sinner's heart he shines, to give him "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ;" and in this glorious ray the Saviour descends to the sinner's soul, and God reveals his Son in him. When the voice of atoning blood at once drowns all the thundering sentences of Sinai, and silences every accusation in that tremendous court of judgment, the sinner feels himself with God at the mercy-seat, where "the righteous (in Christ) may dispute with him, and so be delivered for ever from their Judge," (Job xxiii. 6, 7,) unless he permits the bond-children to bring him again into bondage. Such a sinner has found the righteousness and truth of God in the law, which opened his ear to discipline, and now in Christ he finds mercy and peace in harmony with truth and righteousness; where mercy and truth meet, there God and the true penitent meet—and where righteousness and peace kissed each other, there the Father kisses the prodigal, and the prodigal kisses the King of peace. This is the man that hath escaped "the mount that might not be touched," and that "burneth with fire," and is gone from "blackness and darkness, and tempest, and from the sound of a trumpet, and from the voice of words, and is come to Mount Zion," where the Saviour reigns; and unto "the city of the living God," which he has chosen, founded, and built, and where he dwells, even to "the heavenly Jerusalem." This is the man that spiritually, unctuously, and experimentally knoweth the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent, whom to know is eternal life. And such a one has life hid with Christ in God; he has life in his covenant Head; he has laid hold on eternal life by faith; he has life in the promises, and life and immortality are brought to light in his soul; he is alive, and lives by the faith of the Son of God, and has a lively hope, sure and steadfast, and which anchors within the veil. Such a one has fellowship with the Father; and he that enjoys pardon, rest, and solid peace in his Saviour, by virtue of heart-felt union with him, has fellowship with the Son, and has fellowship with the Spirit; who communicates knowledge, comfort, and joy to him; who maintains his standing in faith, his soul in hope, and his hope in expectation of future glory; who helps his infirmities in prayer, strengthens him with might in his weakness, bears testimony to his adoption, seals him with a comfortable assurance, and operates upon him as the earnest of the future inheritance.

W. HUNTINGDON.

“WHAT THINK YE OF CHRIST?”

MATT. xxii. 42.

“How brilliantly the sun is shining this morning! ‘Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun,’” Eccles. ii. 7, said a traveller to his companion, as they were journeying onward, on a lovely May morning, about an hour after the “bridegroom had come out of his chamber, rejoicing as a strong man to run a race,” Psalm xix. 5. “Let us ask this labouring man,” said the friend, “what he thinks of the sun.” This was an old man, with a scythe over his shoulder, going out to mow the grass. “Good morning, my friend,” said the first speaker, “a lovely morning—a beautiful day for mowing: ‘it is a pleasant thing to behold the sun.’” The solid old man turned his keen eye upon the speaker, and said, “Yes, sir, it is very pleasant,” and heaved a deep sigh. “The sun is a wonderful object,” said the other; “what think you of the sun?” “Think!” said the old man, “why, sir, I believe your question will make me think a little more than I ever thought before about the sun, or at least make me put the many thoughts I have had from time to time together. Think of the sun!” said he, lighting up at the words, “why, if there were no sun, there would be no moon; and if the sun could be withdrawn at this moment, all that we see, all that exists on the earth, the sea, and even ourselves, would in a moment be turned into ice. Truly, what a wonderful thing is the sun! and *those know most of its wonders who know most about it.* But, sir,” said the old man, “your asking me a question, although I have given you a very poor answer, gives me liberty to ask you one.” “Most cheerfully will we answer you,” said one of the travellers. “Then, since you have asked me what I think of the centre of all that is natural, I will ask you about the centre of all that is spiritual. What think ye of Christ?” The tear started into the eye of the first speaker as he heard the welcome sound, and the words of John Newton rolled across his mind:—

‘Sweeter sounds than music knows,
Charm me in Emmanuel’s name;
All her hopes my spirit owes
To his birth, his cross, his shame.’

“Nay, my dear old friend,” said he, “since you have given me such a comprehensive answer to our question, and you are so much our elder, although the propounder of this great question, tell us, we pray you, ‘What think ye of Christ?’” “Well,” said the old pilgrim, “as you wish it, and I have an
GOSPEL AMBASSADOR.] G [JUNE, 1848.

hour to spare, having come out early to meditate at leisure upon Him whom my soul loveth, I will tell you the little I can about my most glorious Christ, and I can only think about him just so much as I know of him; and especially at *night time* that seems but very little; but I must begin with a favourite verse, which my poor faltering voice has often sobbed out in remembrance of his mercy:—

‘Jesus sought me when a stranger,
Wandering from the fold of God,
And to save my soul from danger
Interposed his precious blood.’

“Yes, sirs, I was a stranger to Christ, although I was not what the world would call a wicked man, for I was regular in my behaviour, and thought myself religious, indeed prided myself on my careful avoidance of all that was worldly and unbecoming the character of a Christian; and so I went on until about eighteen years of age, when one evening, meeting with a young friend, he began to tell me of his successful adventures in the ways of sin, to which I listened with some pleasure, but principally with pride in myself, that I hitherto had not been suffered to go the lengths of iniquity my young friend had. That night, on going home, I remember to have told my beloved mother as much as I dared of the story I had heard. How full of self-righteousness was my heart at this moment! But, alas! a week had not passed away before I too was drinking deeply into the very sins my young friend had been speaking of to me. ‘The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?’ Jer. xvii. 9. This fall from my standing as a prudent professor was the most awful thing I had met with in my life; and I surely thought the Lord would now let go his vengeance and consume so vile an apostate; however, sin was too strong for my convictions, although day after day I was constrained to beg from the bottom of my heart for mercy, yet in the face of all, to sin I went again; but, be it never forgotten, from first to last I could not really take pleasure in my sins—it was the boiling over of the pot of corruption, which, indeed, might truly be said to be leaping out of the vessel on the fire into the fire itself; so I found ‘the way of transgressors to be hard’ indeed, Prov. xiii. 15. But I fear I shall be tedious, and that you will say this is a strange way to tell you what I think of Christ; but a dear hymn-maker says,

‘The needy know, and only they,
How precious is a Saviour.’

I went on for nearly twelve months in this sad state, daily adding to the terrible score, not knowing what could possibly help, and hourly feeling like one running down a hill, the further he ran, the faster he went; till I expected nothing short of

a horrible precipice, over which I should soon fall and be dashed to pieces. Now, for such suddenly to feel one come to their side and gently lay hold of them, and powerfully stop them, and sweetly whisper to them a hundred precious words of pardon for the past, and promises for the future, think you, would not the person so helped desire to know much of Him who helped in such a timely way? Ah, yes, and well I remember one morning, just before I set off for my daily labour, my dear father, who was a godly man, read a portion at breakfast time from these words, 'Master, carest thou not that we perish?' Mark iv. 38. What the portion said I know not; but well do I remember, as I was walking along the road, meditating on my sad course, the words broke out of my very soul afresh, 'Master, carest thou not that I perish?' There seemed to be such an appeal in them, as though my feeble polluted hands laid hold of the Lord himself, while he was asleep as it were, in the hinder part of the ship, and powerfully aroused him with the cry, which seemed to imply, that I had been calling on him the whole time the storm had been raging, but he still slept on, taking no notice of my entreaties, until I came thus in desperation with my last appeal, the sea swallowing up the little bark in the vortex. Oh, sirs, it is then men really cry in earnest; and this brings to my mind the words of a sweet hymn we often sing without thinking of the meaning,

' With Christ in the vessel
We'll smile at the storm.'

Did the disciples smile at the storm when they cried out, 'Master, carest thou not that we perish?' Ah, no! it is when he *stills* the storm they smile. He is always in the vessel of mercy, but more frequently, to sense and feeling, sleeping in the sides of the ship! How often have I since had to run to him and awake him with a 'Master, master, we perish!' And I have never found him sleeping so soundly that I could not arouse him, but always just at the sinking moment he has rebuked the waves and the wind, and set me wondering at his mercy and his power. If you are not tired, I will continue my little story, how I came to know, and what I think of, my precious Lord Jesus Christ." "Go on, dear old pilgrim," said the travellers, "it is good to be here." "Well, on the utterance of this appeal to Jesus Christ, of whom up to this moment I had been almost or quite ignorant, in so far as a *feeling* knowledge of him went; there came a remarkable power and energy into my soul, such as I had not felt before, so that over and over again, with increasing vehemence, I cried to him, 'Master, carest thou not that I perish?' until a little whisper came with peculiar melting effect, and said, 'Ye believe in God, believe also in me,' John xiv. 1. A little light came with the word, by

which I at once saw, that up to that hour I had been attempting to force myself into the presence of God *out of Christ*, and immediately after this, while I was musing and wondering what it all could mean, came the words of one of Hart's precious hymns,

‘*Backsliding shun, with patience press
Towards the Sun of righteousness.*’

My soul exclaimed at once from a deep, deep sense of its own helplessness, ‘*Thine is the power;*’ and now bursting into a thousand sweet tears of hope and grief, of wonder and distress, of love and fear, my dissolving spirit sank at the foot of the cross, and there buried in the dust of self-abasement, yet ever looking up and worshipping Him, who I had newly discovered as my only refuge, I kept exclaiming till my bosom was nearly bursting with emotion, ‘*Thine is the power! Thine is the power!* Dear Lord, thou knowest, if thou puttest not forth thy power, much as I hate and abhor myself for my baseness, I must surely fall again and again. Oh, blessed Lord, keep me for thy mercy’s sake, inflict what thou wilt upon me for my baseness, use what means thou wilt to deliver, only, oh most gracious Lord, deliver; I cannot bear, dear Lord, to sin against such mercy; what thou hast now done in me, and said to me, constrains me to believe, that after all thou hast a favour to thy rebel worm; but oh, mighty Jesus Christ, who art able to save and able to deliver, thou knowest I cannot bear to live in such a state as that in which I have been of late. Oh, deliver, deliver, and I will never cease to bless thee for it;’ and so I went on, not knowing how to leave off, for I could get no positive word that the Lord would deliver, although one word rolled constantly through my mind, yet not with such power as to enable me to hang my hope on it, as I could on those which I had just heard; the word was this, ‘*My grace is sufficient for thee.*’ However, during the whole of that day I was more or less under the influence of the new feelings I had experienced in the morning, and those words were constantly turning up in my mind, ‘*Believe also in me.*’ Oh, how did I desire to know more of him; but, alas! how little did I think of the means the Lord would use to bring me to the knowledge of his blessed person and work, of which, I trust, he will enable me to testify in your hearing, and to his honour, this day.

“From that memorable day the Lord delivered me, not by removing the evil intentions in my base self, but by so ordering circumstances, that ever after *opportunity* and *inclination* never came together, therefore ‘no flesh can glory in his presence,’ but ‘to his adorable name be all the praise.’ Amen.

“And now began the wonderful teaching; now the poor cottager’s son began to ‘grow in grace;’ but ah! how little did he

know that those fibres, which were shooting out day by day in the dark earth in the valley of affliction, were so many needful stays to keep the little tree which was growing upward from being carried away by the fierce winds which are ever blowing from a hundred points! Sirs, if you are in the secret, bless the Lord as much for downward growth as for upward thriving, or even for fruit. It is a good thing to be well established; and if you have no root, you will soon wither away. But I must hasten. It was but a few days after my first visit from Jesus, that it pleased the Lord to lay me on a bed of affliction, such as I had never experienced before; and never shall I forget, as I tottered up the stairs to my bed, burning with fever, a little whisper said to me, 'I am with thee,' and then again, 'Believe also in me.' I saw, glimmeringly, that it was my own Lord *Jesus Christ* who was with me; yet, although I wept sweet tears of love, wonder, and gratitude, in the apprehension of his supreme mercy, I did not so fully as now understand what he is in his person, and what he is to me in his grace. This I had to learn, line upon line, here a little, and there a little, Isaiah xxviii. 10, in the school of adversity. I had not been long laid by, before a black cloud seemed to descend upon me, and 'I feared as I entered the cloud.' For weeks I remained almost in total darkness, my mind wandering about almost in despair, fully expecting death would terminate my bodily sufferings, and hell be my everlasting doom. How did I read over and over the two sunbeam-words which had so melted my soul; but all was frozen now, and the sunbeam could not penetrate the gloomy cloud, but the vision was for an appointed time, Hab. ii. 3; and if you, sirs, are born of God, you will find these dark stages in your journey constantly succeeding each other, and the longer and darker the stage, the more brilliant the illumination at the end. 'Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart,' Psal. xcvi. 11. Now we know that whatever is sown, lies buried a long time in the dark earth before any growth is manifest, and even after the blade, the ear, and the full corn in the ear, is produced, the harvest-joy is but a moment compared to the growing time. Just so I found it during my long illness; and towards the close of the scene, when I was hourly expecting death to seal my fate, and was groaning and grieving that I could not get a single glimmer of hope, while I was meditating terror, picturing in blackest colours the horrors of a death out of Christ, suddenly the scene was changed. 'I looked, and all was light,' and why? the Lord had spoken, 'Lo, all these things God worketh oftentimes with man,' Job xxxiii. 29. These were the words; and now I learned more than I had ever known before. 'The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up

into everlasting life,' John iv. 14. 'Oh, sirs, what an unbounded fulness did I find in these precious words, by the Holy Spirit's teaching! and let it be ever borne in mind, that we receive nothing of or from Christ, but by the Spirit; for it is written, 'He shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you,' John xvi. 15. I now began to see, that all through the deep solitude of soul I had been so much bemoaning since the Lord had last spoken to me, there had been a constant springing up of this living water, 'as new born babes desire the sincere milk of the word, that they may grow thereby;' so I had been every moment almost brooding over my condition, and sending up a thousand longing desires, that the Lord would condescend to speak again. I knew what I wanted; for at my worst state I could point to moments, and say, if the Lord repeat that manifestation, I could leap into the arms of death without a single fear. Thus the Lord was pleased to make it clear to me then, and the apprehension of this soul-stay has never fully left me since; that, when in the darkest seasons, even when deathly coldness pervades the whole spiritual frame, yet this 'well of water' is ever—every moment—springing up, in bubblings of holy desires—in hungerings and thirstings after righteousness—in earnest lookings—even Jonah-lookings from the bottoms of the mountains—in pangs of deferred hope and disappointed love, and a hundred other ways—springing up into everlasting life, even into Christ Jesus himself, who is our life. So that often, when in a barren land, I am constrained to listen to the simple quiet gurgling of this precious fountain of life. While it warbles its sweet strains of heavenly melancholy, I am constrained to join words to its symphonies, like these—'Spring up, oh well; sing ye unto it,' Numbers xxi. 17. And it has sometimes occurred, that a full chorus has burst out in unison, 'In that day sing ye unto her, A vineyard of red wine, I the Lord do keep it; I will water it every moment; lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day,' Isaiah xxvii. 2, 3.

"But as I have many more things to tell you respecting his wonderful dealings with me during my pilgrimage, if you are interested in my story, and can meet me at my little cottage yonder, this evening, I will endeavour to relate to you something more of the ways by which my precious Lord Jesus made himself known to the poor cottager."

The travellers, most gladly assenting, shook the dear old man lovingly by the hand as he went on his way, singing in faltering tones,

"Though words can never tell my ease,
Nor all my sorrows paint,
This I can say before his face,
That Christ is all I want."

Our travellers had arrived at the door of the little cottage, full of hope that the dear old pilgrim's vesper-breathings might glow with the same life and power that they had found attend his morning story, when their progress was stayed by the soft plaintive strains of a female voice from within the humble little dwelling, singing in subdued tones, to the tune called "Reuben," the two following verses:—

"My faith would lay her hand
On that dear head of thine,
While like a penitent I stand,
And there confess my sin.

"My soul looks back to see
The burdens thou didst bear,
When hanging on th' accursed tree,
And *hopes* her guilt was there."

And while listening with delight to the sweet melody of the seeming heart-singer, the excellent old man arrived at the door, and gave a hearty welcome to his new friends. "Truly, sirs," said he, "I cannot help thinking that you know something of the life and spirit of our subject this morning, if I may judge by the freedom with which I was enabled to open my heart to you: you made me unlock my casket, and show you my pearls, and I am not authorized, nor anxious to 'cast them before swine;' and now my heart seems warming up a little in the prospect of again testifying of the love and favour bestowed on one so unworthy, and the glory and excellency of the great bestower of these mercies. But come in, my dear sirs," said the old man, as he opened the door, and introduced them into a neat little room, where sat the little singer—a pretty modest-looking young woman, dressed in widow's mourning—rocking a cradle, in which slept a beautiful infant boy. The young widow rose, blushing at the entrance of the strangers, and was about to retire, but the old man said, "Stay, Susan, these gentlemen are only come to talk a little about Him, of whom I know you love to hear; it may be, a word in season may be spoken to-night. Sit down, gentlemen," continued he, as Susan handed the travellers a homely chair, and drew her own seat and the little cradle as much into a corner and out of sight as possible.

"I have been thinking, since I left you this morning," said the dear old pilgrim, "how many times, from my youth up, the Lord hath emptied me from vessel to vessel, and how many captivities I have been into, Jer. xlviii. 11; yet to this hour I am constrained to bear my testimony to his honour and praise, that all my worst afflictions have worked together for my special good, in bringing me into a *feeling position of need* at his footstool, and to know that 'without him I can do nothing.' And this also has the Lord's emptyings taught me, that in whatever

affliction I may be, after a time, after the Lord has appeared as my deliverer again and again, I begin to get contented with my cross, and to settle down on my lees—that is, in a fleshly way; and I can see plainly, if it were possible, and the Lord would permit, I should become a Moab yet! But praises to his mercy, he will not have it so; for no sooner do I begin to settle down, than he prepares a fresh vessel of affliction or temptation, and turns out the poor Ephraim into it. Oh what confusion and turmoil agitate the poor soul at every change of vessels! but by degrees we are led to learn that all these dealings, which so often send us groaning with the heart-ache to the foot of the cross, are only intended to cut us off from every dependence short of our precious Lord Jesus, and make us, indeed, as the hymn says—

‘Sick of self, and fond of him.’

The remainder of my little story, which I trust may not prove tedious to you, will tend to show this gradual destruction of all dependence in self, and growth in simple child-like resting on Jesus Christ, *for all, and as my all.*

“After the Lord had raised me up from my affliction, and established my health, he enabled me to go on softly for some years; during which time, by the Lord’s mercy, I was directed to one of his own children as a wife, with whom, in the midst of many a tempest season, either in mind, body, or estate, I have had to wrestle with the Lord, even till the break of day—I mean till the break of the Lord’s day—for our true wrestling is always in the night seasons; when the day breaketh we prevail, Gen. xxxii. 24, 28; when Jesus, ‘our day-star from on high arises in our hearts,’ 1 Pet. i. 19, we are no longer Jacob—the *heel, grovelling in the dust*, but Israel—*princes prevailing with God.*

“I had not, however, during these years, been without my teachings, sometimes by long winter seasons, in which all seemed frozen up, excepting the little life-kernel of the soul, which, like a hidden fire, would be ever ascending in desire towards the Sun of righteousness; all was, however, but a *hidden striving*, although the lament would go out day by day,

‘But something yet can do the deed,
And that *dear something* much I need;
Thy Spirit can from dross refine,
And move and melt this heart of mine.’

“Nevertheless, when deep pinching necessity began to make the case desperate, the glorious sun rose in all his splendour; the ice dissolved; the mountains flowed down at his presence, Isa. lxiv. 1; the sap rose; the tree of righteousness flourished; ‘for lo, the winter is past; the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is

come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land,' Cant. ii. 11, 12.

"Neither was I, during these smother years, without my many trials, nay, my *daily crosses*, temptations, and afflictions; but out of them all the Lord delivered me! teaching me many sweet and profitable love lessons; giving many tokens of his undying favour and ceaseless care over his little helpless Ephraim child. Oh, sirs, it is good indeed to be at the Lord's school; but, alas! how do we mis-spell every new name he gives us to learn! Once he gave me, in my affliction, 'I am the Lord that healeth thee,' Exod. xv. 26; but till he came, and read it to me himself, I did so jumble the letters together; I thought that, instead of putting me to learn that lesson, to prove himself my 'healer,' it meant that he would shortly consume me. Again, when Amalek, my wicked old self, *the old man*, has come out to fight for repossession of the land, and the enemy has come in like a flood, the great Teacher has given me *Jehovah-nissi* to translate, but until the eye of little faith could see the banner of victory waving over the head, the poor bewildered scholar could spell nothing but destruction and disgrace; but now, with heart full bursting he exclaims, '*The Lord my banner.*' Again, a debt of five hundred talents is presented to be paid in full, and not a farthing can the bankrupt find, although he knows that all is fully due. The Teacher's hand puts down another copy to translate—*Jehovah-jireh*. The learner looks, but finds no talents there; he trembles, lest it may contain a crushing sentence from the Judge; but mercy whispers, 'See, poor trembling child. He knew that you could never pay the debt, but sent the bill, that henceforth you might understand another of his love-names—*The Lord will provide.*' And thus, although we are dull indeed in learning, yet 'he teacheth us to profit.' But I must hasten.

"A few years after I married. Having lost my dear father and mother by death, and in due course having a little family around me—the Lord saw fit to put me into a severe furnace. Being their only surviving child, at my parents' death, I inherited the little furniture you see in our humble cottage. We had by frugality managed, until then, to struggle on without getting into debt; but now affliction and death visited our little dwelling. Oh, sirs, my spirit weeps again at every remembrance of that scene! yet my soul rejoices in God my Saviour, who in these depths of tribulation, more than out-matched every pang of the broken fleshly heart, by exhibitions of himself, as more, ten thousand times, than *all the world to me*.

"My four children were seized, one after another, with a very prevalent disease, which, during months of lingering and heart-rending sufferings, night after night, my aching heart was called

to witness; and which, while I wept over my sweet pining babes, filled me with a tumult of feelings too bitter to admit of description to the full; now, with rebel desperation, charging the Lord with cruelty; then sinking, fear-stricken and horrified at myself, like a leaden effigy at his feet, waiting a long time before my heart, stupified with grief and anguish, could find a cry to raise to him for help; then bursting into tears of deep compassion for the loved ones moaning by my side. Yet still, amid this torrent of distress, the Lord saw fit to add another wound, still deeper, if possible, than the rest; his own best gift, my tender-hearted wife, showed symptoms of a swift decay; consumption, with its livid flush and sparkling eye, would chime its death-bell every evening in the turret of the palace of my heart! How rapid were the strides this sad destroyer took! Ah, to read of shipwrecks while sitting by the fire-side may fill the heart with sympathy; to stand and watch the progress of desolation from a commanding height may strike with dread and horror, quite real and sincere; but, to be stranded on a rock, with every moment plank after plank crashing and giving way, then to see the dearest objects of our life drifted from us, or headlong hurled upon the pointed rocks, and sinking, bleeding, in the boiling billow grave beneath; say what at such a moment can give solace? Can anything make happy such a desolated gazer on the fearful scene around? Yes, there is even now a power in a little whisper, in a still small voice, though all the elements be mingling, fire flashing, tempests bursting, billows rolling, hail and storm and earthquake all conspiring, to drown in desperation the last-left victim on the sinking wreck; yet a still small voice through all can shut the eyes, and fill the ears with melody so sweet, that thunders dwindle into vesper-notes, and all the turmoil of a thousand storms seems but like the gentle murmuring of a ripple in a brook! That small still whisper says, '*Peace—it is I!*' Sirs, have you ever listened to it? Has it ever restored you to life at the expiring moment, when 'all hope that you could be saved was taken away?' Acts xxvii. 20.

"A few bitter months passed in this state of affliction found me bereft indeed! Three of my beloved children, and my dearest earthly friend, the wife of my youth, had been, as it were, stolen from my bosom. Were they household gods? I know not. I loved them tenderly; they were gone, and I was desolate, with but one little cherished tendril left to bind me to earth, as my companion through the remnant of my valley-journey. However, let me not prolong my story here, but hasten to relate how wondrously my heavenly Friend, my Brother born for adversity, now more than filled up the absent places of my lost beloved ones.

"But, first, I should just add another trouble-line to my sad pedigree. My employment, for some time previous to my great distresses, had been as gardener to the gentleman whose house you passed on yonder hill. My great expenses had plunged me into debt with many, besides a sum of money lent me by my master—a gentleman who had and has his riches at command; and more, who loved to hear the broken-hearted cottager talk of Jesus Christ and all his pity and his love to sinners and to him; and who often wept while hearing of his condescension manifested in the visits he vouchsafed to pay so poor a worm; and would dwell upon the Christ-endearing words, so often printed on the desolated bosom of his poor afflicted gardener; yet, sirs, lest I should rest on him, the Lord so left him to the love of gain and of oppression, that when pay-day came, how did he grind me down! deaf to appeal, stopping my pittance to pay his debt, and giving the refuse of his house and garden as my hire; even when he knew my little home was on the eve of being despoiled by others; and yet I could not then but love him. Poor fellow! I was sure that at the bottom he loved Jesus Christ! My heart was ever open to commune with him, and yet he loved his gold too well. I have even known him grind a sixpence from a half-starved workman, while spending five-and-twenty pounds upon a grass-plot in his garden! Sirs, if you have riches too, and love them thus, and yet are travelling heavenward, how will you find the camel-hump oppress and squeeze you to the earth, as pressing onward, you grovel through the narrow way, while the poor, but rich in faith—but dependent on the Lord from day to day—walk on erect, eating their morsel with a thankful heart.

"But to bring my story to a close, I think I hear you say, 'After all you have experienced, now what think you of Christ?' Think of Him! 'who is over all, God blessed for ever, Amen,' Rom. ix. 5. 'Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross,' Phil. ii. 6—8. 'A man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.' 'His visage more marred than any man's.' 'And being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly; and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground,' Luke xxii. 44. 'He hid not his face from shame and spitting,' Isa. l. 6; 'and they mocked him, and spit upon him,' Matt. xxvii. 29, 30. Think of Him! oh marvellous condescension!

'This was compassion like a God;
For when the Saviour knew
The price of pardon was his blood,
His pity ne'er withdrew.'

Think of Him! I

‘View him now in heaven sitting,
Interceding for me there;
Not a moment intermitting
His compassion and his care.’

“Think of Him! When lovers and friends, the dearest he ever gave me on earth, were forsaking me in death, he told me, ‘I have loved thee with an *everlasting* love, therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee. Even at this moment it is my loving-kindness that has drawn thy poor disconsolate soul into this sweet melting communion with myself. I will never, no never, no never, never forsake thee; for lo, I am with thee always, even to the end of the world.’ Think of Him! When the enemy comes in like a flood, I think of his standard; I look to him; I know that all power in heaven and earth is given unto him; yet sometimes I am obliged to wait long before the standard is unfurled; fears rise high, the heart begins to sink, and the poor cottager is obliged to cry out, ‘O, our God, wilt thou not judge them? for we have no might against this great company that cometh against us; neither know we what to do; but our eyes are upon thee,’ 2 Chron. xx. 12. Nevertheless we hang upon his word of promise, ‘on which he has caused us to hope’—‘No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper.’ And when he comes, we admire the glory of his power; go with him into his banqueting house, and then ‘his banner over us is love.’ What think I of Him! He is the chiefest among ten thousand! Think of Him!

‘When trouble, like a mighty cloud,
Has gather’d thick and thunder’d loud,
He near my soul has *always* stood;
His loving-kindness, oh how good!’

“Ah, yes, when pressed down by providential distresses on every side, disconsolate in heart, weak in body, with an empty pocket and an empty cupboard too; with the bailiff in the house, and expecting every day to be turned out of doors, to be thrust into a jail or a poor-house; my subtle enemy telling me I had so far offended my best Friend, that he had now for ever forsaken me, and I, like a fool, half believing him; then for his grace, his mercy, and his power to be shown, by his suddenly putting a thought in the mind, and overruling the hard hearts of creditors to consent to conditions; then showing the most simple means by which all may be made straight; then, while the soul is lying at his feet, worshipping him, and going out in a thousand breathings of sweet gratitude to him—then for him to begin to talk about his supreme love; to whisper to the listening heart a thousand pledges of tenderness; reading over, and into the bursting bosom, his own addresses to ‘Our Father in heaven.’ ‘Father, I will that they also, whom thou

hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me; *that they all may be one*; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, *that they also may be one in us*; I in them, and thou in me, that they may be perfect in one,' John xvii. 21, 23, 24. '*Thy Maker is thy husband! the Lord of hosts is his name!*' While at the same time, in the most glorious manner, he opens to us the Scriptures, and shows us the blessed *union* that makes the weeping worm *one* with the glorious sympathizing Head in heaven. Truly thus 'with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, we are changed into the same image from glory to glory,' 2 Cor. iii. 18. Think of Him! Words can never tell the thoughts! Thoughts can never reach the extent of blessedness in one single ray of this infinite sun of glory! But when we see him! oh, sirs, my heart leaps at the prospect!

" 'A few more rolling suns at most,' and it will be even so with us for ever. 'When we see him we shall be like him.' Then farewell sin; no more shall we then sigh out from our inmost souls with Jabez, 'Keep me from evil, that it *may not grieve me.*' All sorrow left behind! Yes, and *Amalek* left behind! and the devil left behind! and, methinks, after I have gazed upon HIM, till lost in wonder, love, and adoration, then the first waking word will be, What think ye of Christ? Think of Him, sirs!

'If such the sweetness of the streams,
What must the fountain be!'

"But my heart fails at the thought of such love; especially when I think and know that 'he *rests* in his love,' and that 'he hateth putting away.'

'Yet a season, and we know,
Happy entrance will be given;
All our sorrows left below,
And earth exchanged for heaven!'

"Come, dear sirs, the old man's heart is warm; let us close by singing the precious verse of dear Newton's, which embodies all I can say:—

'If asked what of Jesus I think,
(Though all my best thoughts are but poor,)
I call him my meat and my drink,
My life, and my strength, and my store,
My Shepherd, my Husband, my Friend,
My Saviour from sin and from thrall,
My hope from beginning to end,
My portion, my Lord, and my all!'

They sang—Susan withdrew—her sobbings would not suffer her to join—the melted travellers rose to depart—the old pil-

grim, with a face radiant with inward happiness, referring to his daughter, sighed out, "Poor dove! she too knows what a thorny path is! but Hallelujah! she has found the pearl of great price! Married young—lost her husband at sea, and will soon herself follow her precious mother. Sirs, nature weeps!

' But though our cup seems fill'd with gall,
There's something secret sweetens all! ' "

The travellers promised to see the dear old man again shortly, and relate a little of what they knew of his glorious Lord Jesus; then, joining in mutual blessings, they bade each other a loving adieu; and were heard to say, as travelling homeward, "Did not our hearts burn within us as he talked by the way?" Amen.

Gospel Cottage Lecture.

THE GRASS WITHERETH.

THE Lord the Spirit hath testified to the church, through Isaiah, "that the grass withereth, and the flower fadeth, but the word of our God shall stand for ever." Then amidst all mutation, inward or outward, there is given firm and invariable ground for every believer in the Lord Jesus Christ to build for eternity; and a rock for his anchor to fasten ~~in~~, in every tempestuous wind, or roaring, raging storm.

God hath spoken ~~in~~ his holiness, "and his covenant he will not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of his lips"—blessed! *blessed certainty!* for tried and tempted souls!

We have no revelation of God, but in Christ,—we have no revelation of Christ, (and the Father in him,) but by the holy word, and we have no revelation of Christ in that word, to our hearts, but by the power of the Holy Ghost, Matt. xi. 27; and when that sovereign revelation is made in the mind of any poor sinner, by the special energy of the Lord the Spirit, his word of inspiration works effectually in the light, life, love, grace, spirit, and truth thereof. The written word is the mind of God the Holy Spirit. "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," 2 Peter i. 21. He is the author of the sacred oracles; and they are the goings forth of the Spirit of God, John vi. 63. We all know that words, whether expressed by speech or writing, are only a form, or way of communicating, the mind of one person to another; and a person may apprehend the sound of what is spoken or written, when he does not enter into the mind or spirit of the speaker or writer. So, persons may read and hear the word of God, who never receive it any further than their eyes, or ears, or some barren speculation of it, in their heads; and consequently are strangers to that spirit and life contained therein, 1 Cor. ii. 14. But a true

believer in Christ receives him as revealed in his word ; for the same Holy Ghost, who has imparted the mind of God to us, in the holy Scriptures, gives the truth of that word its powerful entrance into our hearts, Jer. xv. 16 ; by which means we drink into one Spirit with Christ, 1 Cor. xii. 13. Our dear Lord says, the communication of grace is by his word, John v. 39. It is by the glorious truths therein contained that all spiritual blessings are enjoyed ; for it is through the energy of the Holy Spirit alone they are made effectual, Luke xxiv. 45 ; Acts xvi. 14 ; 1 Thess. i. 5 ; Acts x. 44. The word is an ample revelation of the whole counsel of God—the bright manifestation of his mind and will—a perfect plan of divine wisdom—and an all-sufficient directory into the mysteries of grace : and as the Divine Teacher makes it plain to our spiritual conception, he constrains us to say, with the psalmist, Psa. cxix. 140, “ Thy word is very pure, therefore thy servant loveth it.”

God the Holy Ghost, in sealing instruction unto the hearts of the chosen, redeemed, and called people, never puts ideas into the heart of any one distinct from what he has indited in the Scriptures—he never speaks of himself, but guides the hearts of the redeemed into the light and truth of that which is already spoken by *the truth*, himself, in the word of his grace, John xvi. 13. By the invincible grace of the Holy Spirit, our hearts are opened to attend to the gospel of Christ—he brings our wills in sweet subjection to receive it with meekness—he proceeds in strengthening our spiritual faculties (which he himself has created) to behold the glorious excellency of the Sun of righteousness shining in the firmament of free grace ; increases our desire to enjoy the blessings of the kingdom, and (according to the measure that he gives us) to apprehend the glory of God, shining in the face of Jesus Christ ; the lower do we lay in self-abhorrence from day to day ; we reverence and adore the fountain of all grace and mercy, and gratefully acknowledge his revealing and gathering power, displayed in and by the word of his grace, to and in our hearts, and rejoice that every spiritual operation in us is by the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, Eph. vi. 17.

As to those persons who pretend to lay hold on the word of God, when the word has never laid hold on them, and in their self-sufficiency enter into contention about it—who never felt their want of power to believe it—nor felt the overcoming grace by which poor convicted sinners are brought into believing—such, I say, who have never been cut down by the law, nor healed and raised by the gospel, such persons have not a just claim to that divine evidence adduced by Paul, 1 Thess. i. 5 ; but that need not weaken the well-grounded confidence of these who have been brought to prove the firmness of super-

natural support, from the word of God's grace, in those seasons when reason, sense, and feelings have all appeared against them—through which support there hath been a nourishing of the same faith (if not in the same high degree) as Abraham, who, "against hope, believed in hope, because he judged him faithful who had promised." That holy man was taught from above to behold infinite love, as the cause and source of the promise—he considered the perfection of the promiser—he saw that divine faithfulness was engaged in the word promised, and which faithfulness insured the performance; and he knew that every obstacle, however formidable, must be weakness itself, before the invincible power of the accomplisher. Lord Jesus, grant me faith of this kind in every trying hour; though hell may rage, and earth upon me frown. A pilgrim should live above the slights and contempt of men in the cause of God and truth—their frowns *cannot* kill, nor are their smiles to make alive those whom *God hath made* his witnesses. Well, we are hastening on with more than railway speed to our terminus of all things here. A very little while and it will be said, "The Master is come, and calleth for thee;" then farewell sin, world, and devil; and welcome, welcome holy and eternal joy and glory. "He that hath wrought us for the self-same thing is God," whose sovereign grace, proceeding from his own immutable bosom, reigns triumphant in the dear Son of his love, and efficaciously operates by the Holy Ghost in all and every one of his own dear elect—whose word prevails in them, above all the calumnies and reproaches—above all the fallacies and seductions of men, unto that state, where we shall breathe in the pure air of divine love; and in the perpetual glories of everlasting light, be filled with the uninterrupted streams of immortality, and glory redound to the eternal Three-in-One.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR.

MY DEAR SIR,—I cannot sufficiently thank you for your kind present, and best wishes; we enjoyed the one, and appreciate the other. I was glad to hear of you from my esteemed friend *Carolus*,—a song. O that he may be instrumentally a bridge to many over a Jordan of many a spiritual and soul concern, a companion of thine, a lovely song to hundreds, and be highly favoured with sweet views, and a clear call to his ministry. And what can make a man's call to the work clearer than clear views of truth, a love to them, zeal for them, a door of utterance, doors of providence, the supporting hand of God in his work, and owning the truth in the experience of his people? Such an one is not to be found every day. It is true

God has never been without a witness for himself in the world, although his own word and ministers have long prophesied in sackcloth, and will till the man of sin sinks to rise no more. Thus we come to your question, Are the three days and a half nearly run out—the prophetic 1260 years? Could we ascertain the exact time of its rise, we could know the year of its fall; but the learned cannot easily ascertain whether the number is 666, or 606: no doubt the time is fixed, and the vision is sure. What a mercy we, as a nation, are the preserved of the Lord! or else the winds of deism, arianism, arminianism, and popery, would soon blow us away; but the blessing of a protestant king, excellent laws, praying people, and a few very faithful ministers, keep back these winds that they should not destroy us; and the very nation, yea, the European earth, full of idolaters, small and great, papists and half-hearted protestants, would soon be destroyed; but even the judgment determined upon them cannot fall till the Lord has sealed, housed, secured his own, as he did Noah in the ark, Lot in Zoar, Israelites by blood, Jews when the slaughtermen appeared, Ezek. ix., disciples at Pella beyond Jordan—so he will take care of his own in principles and persons. Tumultuous, noisy, and angry as the sea may be, this nation may be; towering as the trees, and in false confidence firm as the earth, yet doomed to destruction, and will meet with it when their iniquity is full. Lord Jesus, take unto thee thy great power, and reign universally over the earth by the power of truth, till the kingdoms of this world become thine. Villages and mere islands of the sea are his at present, but the vast continents of our globe will be in submission to him. Not that even then *all* will be spiritual, nor all saved; for although public enmity will be slain, and the gospel universally professed, yet when our Lord comes, you can judge of the state of the church (see Laodicea, and Matt. xxv.) Your knowledge *of* and love *to* truth, shows you are married to it. Rejoice then with the wife of your youth, and let her promises and doctrines always satisfy thee; let her be as the lovely hind and the pleasant roe, and be thou always ravished with her love, as set forth in it.

I am grieved to part with the creature. Why loose ye my brother? But the Lord hath need of him to convey some part of his mystical body to the temple, while angels and lovers of truth carry their victorious palms in their hands, and wish prosperity to the kingdom. And now the hail of error is coming down upon the forest, mere professors, and the city of truth is low, and its lovers are in a low place—*still in Christ*. Blessed are they that preach Christ amidst the confused people that send forth thither labourers, characters with learning, and poor illiterate, stupid fellows like me, Isaiah xxxii.

It was and is distressing to loose my firm, affectionate friend, but upon every earthly good we see inscribed—*To be taken away at pleasure.*

Hope you are increasing in the knowledge of Christ, that you may increase in confidence in the Father's love, and in the person, work, and offices of God our Saviour, by the teachings of the Holy Ghost.

Excuse haste, as I am constantly assailed by visitors.

Yours truly, —————

16th Feb. 1826.

DEAR EDITORS,—“The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.” So said and so felt Job, the tried servant of the most high God, under heavy affliction; and so shall say all the Lord's tried family, more or less, even under the most gloomy circumstances. Should the destroying hand of time rob us of many comforts, and changing circumstances leave us with only a morsel of bread and a draught of water, and we are ready to say with the widow of Zarephath, “that we may eat it and die”—no, poor soul, not so, for you shall not die, but live; for this is thine extremity, but God's opportunity. “For thus saith the Lord God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail.” How oftentimes the Lord is pleased to cause his goodness to pass before us in the way! and this so humbles the soul, that it becomes a matter of surprise that we are still in the land of the living—still out of hell. Then we can view the Lord's temporal mercies in their proper light, and not worship them, or claim them as our own, using and not abusing them, blessing the Lord when he bestows them, and also when he is pleased to withhold them, saying, “The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away.”

A few weeks previous to losing a dear infant, the above scripture was very much on my mind, and rested there with a degree of sweetness; why, I could not imagine, until the Lord was pleased very suddenly to call the infant home. Then it was, while on my knees beseeching the Lord to make the child a blessing to its parents, and to devote it to his blessed self—while thus engaged, at a distance from home, having left the child in health (apparently), the news came that my child was no more. Thus did the Lord answer my prayer, even while I was yet speaking, but in his own way. Yet in this hour of trouble did it resound in my heart, “The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord;” to which my soul responded, “Even so, Father, for so it seemeth good in thy sight.” As the sparks fly upward, so is man born to trouble;

and many have found it a great trouble to part with a kind father, or fond mother, a loving wife, or affectionate husband, playful brothers or sisters, darling children, innocent babes—all must part, for this is the common lot of man.

But even as Aaron's rod swallowed up the other rods; so does this blessed scripture swallow up all our troubles; for what the Lord hath given his dear people is more than tongue can express.

But this we know, he gave himself, and in so doing hath taken away our sins; "for by his stripes we are healed," salvation bestowed, and sin removed. Truly this is giving and taking away like a God. Oh what a God is our God, to remember us in our low estate, to bestow the good and remove the evil! What a glorious exchange! the flinty old heart of stone taken away, and the tender contrite heart of flesh brought to light; so that enmity is slain, and love rules, having at the Lord's hands beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garments of praise for the spirit of heaviness. O Lord, in mercy cause the souls of thy people to hunger more and more after thy blessed self, granting, that while they are in the world, they may not be of the world; feeling that thou hast chosen them from the world, until they reach that happy place, where there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and the Lamb shall be in it, and they shall serve him, and they shall see his face, and his name shall be in their foreheads, and there shall be no night there, and they need no candle, neither light of the sun, for the Lord giveth them light, and they shall reign for ever and ever.

Then, and not till then, shall we see how the Lord hath given every good (for "no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly,") and taken away all evil from us (for "no evil shall come nigh thee.")

May the Lord bless your labours.

A CRUMB FROM A POOR MAN'S TABLE.

London, April 30th, 1848.

If the Lord will, I hope to send a crumb every month.

EXTRACT FROM A NARRATIVE OF THE CONVERSION OF THIRZA, A JEWESS, OF ELBERFELD, GERMANY.

"TOWARDS the conclusion of divine service, on one of the last Sundays during the season of Lent, a stranger entered a secluded church, in one of the suburbs of a wealthy commercial city. She was closely veiled, and her figure shrouded beneath a mantle. With a noiseless and timid step she passed along,

and took the first vacant seat behind a pillar near the door, evidently desirous of being unnoticed. The looks of the congregation were simultaneously directed towards her; for this was not the first time of her appearance among them. Some weeks previously she had entered the church in the same manner, and had since regularly attended on each returning sabbath. She always came about the commencement of the sermon; and while the dismissal hymn was being sung, she retired quietly and unobtrusively. It was obvious, that while she studiously sought to remain unknown, she listened to the preacher with the most intense interest and deep emotion, often giving vent to her feelings in audible sobs. Hence she had become an object of curiosity to some, and of special interest and prayer to the worthy clergyman and many believers among his flock. Her dress and manners bespoke rank and opulence; but her name and her history were alike involved in obscurity.

"On the morning alluded to, she again occupied her usual seat near the door. The hymn of thanksgiving for the Lamb slain for the sins of the world had been sung, and the clergyman, a bold and faithful preacher of the cross, was at the point of commencing his discourse. He began by declaring the power and efficacy of the blood of Christ, and pointed to the type of the paschal lamb, whose blood the children of Israel were to sprinkle on their door-posts, as a token for the destroying angel to pass over their dwellings. The portion of Scripture under consideration was the imprecation of the Jews: 'His blood be on us, and on our children,' Matt. xxvii. 25. These words the preacher set before his congregation, in the twofold view of a curse and a blessing.

"Every word seemed to pierce the heart of the stranger: her agitation became more visible, and her sobs louder. With awful solemnity, the preacher reiterated the fearful imprecation, 'His blood be on us, and on our children.' He showed how this curse, which they had so madly invoked, had fallen upon them: how the Roman army, the swift messengers of Almighty vengeance, had suddenly overwhelmed them, and, after a siege of unparalleled horrors, razed Jerusalem to the ground. He followed them as wanderers and outcasts over the face of the earth, a reproach and a proverb among the Gentiles. He dwelt upon their abject state, their national and spiritual alienation from God, and then held up the dark and melancholy picture as a warning to the Christian world.

"The congregation listened with the most riveted attention, and were deeply affected by this powerful representation. The greatest silence prevailed throughout the church. The stranger in vain strove to suppress her overwhelming emotion; and as the

preacher continued to portray the fallen state of the children of Israel, scattered and peeled among the nations, a piercing shriek broke the solemn stillness. Every eye was directed to the spot whence it proceeded. The stranger had fallen senseless to the ground. Several persons hastened to her assistance, and carried her out of the church. The wife of the clergyman hurried after them, and had her conveyed to the parsonage.

"Since her first appearance at church, this lady had felt great interest in the young stranger; she had commended her to the Lord, and this morning especially had bestowed much thought upon her. With kind consideration for her feelings she besought the bystanders to retire, and to leave the young lady under her care.

"When left alone with the object of her solicitude, she hastened to disencumber her from part of her dress; and, on removing her bonnet and veil, was struck by the singularly beautiful countenance of the young woman, who lay on the couch in a deep swoon. She did not recognise her features, but was convinced, from her whole appearance, that she was a person of distinction.

"Maria (this was the name of the clergyman's wife) felt that she stood before one who was an instance of the mysterious dealings of God with the children of men, and rejoiced in the hope that this singular occurrence might perhaps lead to a revelation of his purpose concerning her. In silent prayer she hastened to apply the needful remedies, but it was long before she perceived any indications of returning consciousness. The internal struggle had been great, and her swoon was proportionably deep. At last she languidly opened her eyes. Maria, fearful lest the sudden sight of a stranger might startle her, stepped aside, but continued to watch her with tender anxiety. She muttered a few words in a low voice. Maria approached, and gently bending over her, heard her repeat, in broken accents, the words of the awful imprecation, 'His blood be upon us, O God! and upon the children also, O thou holy God! Woe, woe is me—unhappy child of Israel that I am—oh! his blood upon me!'

"The anguish of her heart again overpowered the faint symptoms of returning life, and she sank back in a yet deeper swoon. The few words which she had uttered went to the heart of Maria, who could not restrain her tears. One glance into the mystery was already vouchsafed to her. The unknown—for she was no longer a stranger to Maria's love—was a daughter of Israel—a Jewess! A closer inspection of her features confirmed this; but all was not yet unravelled. That a young Jewess of rank should have entered a Christian church, have been so moved by the preaching of the cross,

and manifested so unquestionable a proof of the work of grace, in the deep anguish of her heart, led Maria to anticipate a yet further evidence of the faithfulness and love of the Saviour of sinners. With redoubled affection she applied every means to restore the young Jewess, who did not again open her eyes till a considerable time had elapsed. Maria, bending over her, was giving vent to her emotion in silent tears. The stranger's first look fell on Maria. 'Where am I?' she asked confusedly, 'Who is that? Is it an angel? But angels never weep—yet, perhaps, angels do weep for poor lost Israel. Alas! alas! we children of the curse!' She wrung her hands in agony, while she thus poured forth the bitterness of her anguish. Maria took her hand, and pressing it gently, said, 'Compose yourself, my love. You are with a friend; for though you are unknown to me, yet is my heart drawn towards you. Therefore let me entreat you to be composed.'

"These kind assurances soon recalled her to herself, but she was greatly embarrassed to find herself in an unknown house, and with a stranger. Maria, suspecting the cause of her uneasiness, sought to allay it; and after requesting her to partake of some refreshment, informed her where she was, and what had taken place in the church. 'Ah! yes! I recollect it all now! Oh! those fearful words: "His blood be on us, and on our children." Oh! they pierced my heart like an arrow!'

" 'My dear young friend,' said Maria, 'collect yourself. For you, I confidently believe the curse has been converted into a blessing. To your soul the blood of the Lamb proclaims mercy and peace.'

" 'Ah! you know not what you say. You know not who I am.'

" 'Nor do I ask to know,' replied Maria; 'but this one thing I do know, that whoever you may be, there is mercy for you, and for every sinner who feels the weight of his sins, and flees for pardon to the Saviour of sinners.' While she spoke thus, Maria again took her hand, and looked at her with affection. The young Jewess was deeply moved, and struggled to overcome her feelings. She tried to turn away, but could not; at last she said, 'You are so full of love to a total stranger: your kindness is a solace to me, and gladly would I open my heart to you, but I fear that you would then forsake me.' Maria smiled, and shook her head. She continued, 'What! will you not look upon me with hatred—with abhorrence—when I tell you to what people I belong? Can you love a poor child of the curse—a daughter of Israel—a Jewess?'

" 'That you are a daughter of Abraham, was revealed to me

by the cry which you uttered when you revived ; and I have a good hope that you will walk in the steps of the faith of Abraham, the father of the faithful. Am I not right? You seek Jesus who was crucified ; and, believe me, I therefore regard you not as a stranger, but as a beloved sister.'"

LINES WRITTEN ON MY BIRTH-DAY,

MARCH, 21, 1848.

Four seven years have pass'd away
 Since I first saw the natural day :
 I was born in sin and born of earth,
 But have I seen a second birth ?
 That's the great important question,
 Nature will not do to rest on ;
 Am I indeed a son of God ?
 True, I have felt his chastening rod !
 Yea, he hath made me know my state,
 To be a sinner vile and great ;
 Yet lost and ruin'd I was found,
 He placed me on salvation ground.
 Yes, he hath made me feel my need
 Of his own blood to intercede ;
 'Tis he hath kept my eyes thus far
 Gazing on him, my morning star.
 Through rugged paths he hath me brought,
 Yet lessons good by them he's taught ;
 He's learn'd me to admire and sing
 His love divine, through Christ, my king.
 But many times I doubt and fear,
 That God to me will not draw near ;
 Nor shall I see his lovely face,
 And find him as my hiding place.
 But, blessings on his precious name,
 His love is evermore the same ;
 For, though I fear, he comes again,
 Dispels my doubt, removes my pain.
 And thus he keeps me moving on,
 Sometimes I'm up, and sometimes down,
 Now, weighted well with pain and grief,
 Anon he flies to my relief.

"Sinner," he says, "rejoice in me,
Thy Captain's made thee ever free.
On me then look, nor be dismay'd,
When passing through the storm and shade.

"I've conquer'd all thy foes and *mine*,
Nor shall they *hurt* though they may join
In one united band to kill;
Thy soul is safe, do what they will!

"I've kept thee by my mighty hand,
Nor could the power of hell withstand.
I've wash'd thee in my precious blood,
And I will bring thee home to God."

Those precious words my heart did cheer,
I felt my Jesus very dear;
I loved to keep and hold him fast,
And proved him the same, from first to last.

I found him all in all to me;
In him alone I've liberty;
With him alone I walk at large;
In him alone I've full discharge.

In me there dwelleth no good thing,
From self, therefore, can nothing bring
To justify me in his sight,
But plead my dear Redeemer's right.

I'm weak, and poor, and vile, and base;
Ah, yes, he knows my loathsome case.
Helpless I am, and all impure,
Yet my Physician all can cure.

O, look upon me, Lord, again,
And make the matter very plain.
My soul wants nothing, Lord, but thee,
My all in all—in all to be.

And then when pain and death appear,
Secure in thee, I'll nothing fear;
But onward march to heaven above,
Rejoicing that my God is love.

Along the road I'll sing his praise,
Nor shall I cease in endless days;
But in eternity I'll sing
The love I bear to Christ my King.

Manchester.

J. H.

